



Irish Wolfhound Club of America, Inc.

May 27, 2009

Senate Appropriations Committee

Subject: **OPPOSE SB 250 as Amended 5/5/2009**
VOTE 'NO' ON SB 250

Dear Senators and Assembly Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Irish Wolfhound Club of America (IWCA) and the IWCA Legislative Committee (IWCA-LC). The IWCA is the 700-member parent club for Irish Wolfhound owners nation-wide, as well as the anchor for 14 Regional and Local clubs. Two of the oldest of those regional clubs are located in California, thereby giving this breed a substantial California presence with a strong vested interest in the activities of its elected officials.

The IWCA and IWCA-LC continue to oppose SB 250 as it's a flawed piece of legislation which cannot be fixed with any subsequent amendments. We therefore request to be included in the numerical individual **opposition** count for any Bill Analysis. Additionally, we request that our **opposition** not be withdrawn except by my written consent.

Existing state law already requires owners of intact animals pay a license fee that is at least double that to license a sterilized animal (Food and Agricultural Code Section 30804.5); and provides for enhanced and graduated fines for owners whose intact dogs are impounded (Food and Agricultural Code Section 30804.7). These statutes are sufficient to incentivize owners to sterilize their animals and to address animal control concerns with specific intact animals who are impounded repeatedly.

SB 250 will be difficult and costly to enforce. Further, SB 250 violates pet owner property rights granted to Californians by both the federal and state constitutions. This bill is unreasonable as it potentially defines all pet owners as "irresponsible"; subject to fines and having their pets sterilized as mandated by the state. Upon receiving one animal-related code violation, local Animal Control agencies have the right to revoke and deny your license to own an intact animal in California *for the rest of your life*. This bill if it were to become law would eliminate working dogs such as those utilized for law enforcement, service dogs and search and rescue.

Further, the term "custodian" is used throughout the bill and is not defined in the legislation or within the existing Food and Agricultural Code. This term is simply another word for "guardian." The AKC and IWCA support the use of the term "owner" rather than "guardian" when referring to the keeping of dogs. Both the AKC and IWCA believe the term "guardian" may reduce the legal status and value of dogs as property and thereby restrict the rights of owners, veterinarians and government agencies to protect and care for dogs. We strongly support efforts to educate the public about responsible dog ownership to ensure that all dogs receive the care, love and attention they deserve.

The IWCA-LC on behalf of the IWCA membership, many of whom are residents of California, respectfully urges you to **vote 'NO' when SB 250** is brought to a vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Scotia Colleen Brosnan
Irish Wolfhound Club of America, Inc.
Legislative Committee
P.O. Box 6322
Folsom, CA 95763
(916) 983-8704