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HOUSE MEMORIAL 70

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016

INTRODUCED BY

Idalia Lechuga-Tena

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE REGULATION AND LICENSING DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND MEASURES TO ADDRESS COMPANION ANIMAL OVERPOPULATION AND WELFARE.

WHEREAS, every year, approximately seven million six hundred thousand companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide; of those, approximately three million nine hundred thousand are dogs and three million four hundred thousand are cats; and

WHEREAS, while it is nearly impossible to estimate how many stray cats and dogs live in the United States, estimates for cats alone range as high as seventy million; and

WHEREAS, the American humane society estimates that over seventy percent of cats in animal shelters are euthanized due to overpopulation; and

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1 WHEREAS, in San Juan county, more than ten thousand
2 adoptable animals are euthanized in the two local shelters
3 every year; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2013, the Dona Ana county-Las Cruces animal
5 shelter euthanized five thousand five hundred animals; and

6 WHEREAS, in Carlsbad, more than one-half of the animals in
7 the city's animal shelter had to be euthanized in 2013; and

8 WHEREAS, to address companion animal overpopulation, more
9 than one hundred municipalities throughout the United States
10 have banned the sale of cats and dogs by pet stores or limited
11 the sale of cats and dogs to animals that have been rescued;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, in 2006, the city of Albuquerque banned the sale
14 of companion animals, including cats and dogs, by pet stores;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, prior to Albuquerque instituting the ban, the
17 city was forced to euthanize approximately three hundred
18 unwanted cats and dogs each week; and

19 WHEREAS, since Albuquerque instituted its ban, animal
20 adoptions have increased by twenty-three percent and euthanasia
21 at city shelters has decreased by thirty-five percent; and

22 WHEREAS, the American society for the prevention of
23 cruelty to animals estimates that more than ten thousand
24 large-scale commercial dog breeding facilities, commonly known
25 as puppy mills, where profit is given priority over the

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1 well-being of the dogs, exist in the United States; and

2 WHEREAS, while federal Animal Welfare Act regulations
3 impose minimal standards of care on some large-scale commercial
4 animal breeders, there is a need at the state level to close
5 regulatory loopholes in the act, increase the standards for
6 animal welfare at commercial operations and reduce the number
7 of unwanted puppies and kittens that are bred in the state; and

8 WHEREAS, at least twenty-five states have enacted
9 legislation to regulate the commercial breeding of cats and
10 dogs, utilizing varying definitions of a commercial breeder and
11 differing levels of enforcement and penalties;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
13 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the
14 superintendent of regulation and licensing be requested to
15 convene a working group of stakeholders to address
16 recommendations for laws, including pet store bans such as the
17 one enacted in Albuquerque and the licensing of commercial
18 animal breeders, to reduce companion animal overpopulation and
19 increase companion animal welfare in the state; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be composed
21 of the chair of the animal sheltering board, a representative
22 from county and municipal animal shelters, a representative
23 from a nonprofit humane society or animal rescue organization,
24 a representative from an animal advocacy group, a
25 representative of pet store owners, a member of the animal law

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1 section of the state bar and one member of the public; and
2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group report its
3 findings and recommendations, including an estimate of the
4 fiscal impacts associated with implementation of such
5 recommendations, to the appropriate interim legislative
6 committee by no later than August 1, 2016; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
8 transmitted to the superintendent of regulation and licensing.