



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM

February 24, 2011

The Honorable Robert Maiocco
President, Medford City Council
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, MA 02155

Dear Members of the Medford City Council:

The American Kennel Club has been contacted by residents of Medford who are concerned about a possible mandatory spay/neuter law in your city. On behalf of Medford's responsible dog owners, we are writing to respectfully express our concerns about mandatory spay neuter laws and their unintended consequences that impact the ability of responsible residents own an intact dog.

We understand that there are animal population concerns in Medford, and believe that a solution is attainable that will address your concerns without punishing responsible dog owners simply because they choose to own an intact dog.

The AKC opposes the concept of mandatory spay/neuter of purebred dogs. Instead, we support reasonable and enforceable laws that protect the health and welfare of purebred dogs and do not restrict the rights of responsible breeders and owners. Mandatory spay/neuter laws are an ineffective solution to animal control problems because they fail to address the heart of the issue—irresponsible ownership. These laws are extremely difficult to enforce and can be easily evaded by irresponsible animal owners by simply not licensing their pets. This proposed ordinance will unfairly punish responsible owners who are already complying with local animal control laws, while irresponsible owners continue to make problems for the community and local shelters.

We believe the answer to population issues is strict enforcement of leash and nuisance laws, rather than passage of new burdensome regulations. The key to resolving this issue is to implement and expand the wide range of programs available to educate the public about responsible breeding practices and dog ownership. Enclosed are two documents that outline our position and provide for more effective solutions to your concerns.

As you and the members of the Medford City Council consider this matter, the American Kennel Club and your constituent dog owners would be pleased to assist you in developing reasonable animal control regulations and public education programs designed to ensure that dogs and their owners remain respected members of their communities.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Clark
Administrator, AKC Government Relations