

IN OPPOSITION TO AB 1634

ADOA, THE AMERICAN DOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION (A national organization based in New York) and I believe that Mrs. Strand's blog on AB 1634 is excellent, covering almost all of the bases. We agree with her that this bill should be defeated and for all of her reasons plus a few more.

I am a retired dentist who has shown purebred dogs in obedience and tracking. I have never bred any of my dogs, always spaying or neutering them at an age when my veterinarian and I thought it was appropriate.

AB 1634 WOULD REDUCE THE GENE POOL OF PUREBRED DOGS

I wanted purebreds because they were predictable in size and if obtained from a reputable breeder, in temperament. Many of those who advocate only mixed breed dogs claim that the purebred is inferior because it has so many diseases. The fact is that the genes for all of the diseases in the dog could be present in any of the mixed breeds, but specific genetic diseases are concentrated within one or two breeds in the purebred. A reputable breeder will know what to look for and breed away from those problems as long as that breeder has enough intact animals to select from to breed. The purebred is like an isolated human population, whereas the mixed breed has its genes spread out throughout the mixed breed populations, more like us humans. The result is something most remarkable in the treatment of diseases that are genetic in origin, and common to man and dog. Both the human genome and the canine genome have been recently mapped, and researchers in both Canada and the U.S. have found that in those diseases which purebreds have in common with man, the wayward gene can more easily be traced on the purebred dog genome than on man's. What is more, once isolated, ways of treating the dog can set a regimen for treatment on humans. Since the dog lives a shorter life (about one to seven of our years), the disease and treatment progress faster. This enables the researchers to model the treatment on the dog before treating us humans. This can't be done on the mouse because of the mouse's much shorter life span. Several treatments and cures have already been found for various forms of epilepsy, and cancer breakthroughs are right around the corner. This is almost as exciting as stem cell research, but without involving a fetus or newborn child. Its potential lies in the specific gene pools within the various purebred dog breeds.

From the AVMA Journal, March 15, 2005:

Elaine Ostrander, PhD, chief of the cancer genetics branch of the National Human Genome Research Institute, believes canine genome research could be particularly useful in studying cancer. "By using dogs as an animal model and comparing what we learn in them to what we know about human cancer, we are slowly but surely putting together the basic vocabulary of cancer susceptibility," Dr. Ostrander says.

For more information about this exciting new research and the part that purebred dogs play in it go to: <http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/mar05/050315h.asp>
and: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/science/jan-june07/cancer_03-15.html

AB1634 would force breeders to pay a tariff for each and every intact dog they keep. In order to have a diversity for breeding, in order that breeders are not forced to breed litter mates, a breeder must keep extra intact dogs. We do not know how much local communities will tax these intact dogs, whether it will be \$70 per dog or \$700 per dog, but it is obvious that the numbers that

would be financially feasible to keep intact would be reduced, and thus so would the quality of the breeding.

Most recently comes news that genetic researchers have found the gene that determines dog size, and this is certain to lead to us learning “about how size is genetically programmed in humans.” See:

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/04/06/MNGJOP3U0G1.DTL&hw=canines>

There are about 300 genetically caused diseases that affect both man and dog, and the best chance of treatment and cure is through the canine genome and the purebred dog. Breeders keep records of pedigrees that go way back in time. In the case of the gene that determines size 5,000 pedigrees of Portuguese Water Dogs (PWD) were sent to researchers who also collected 500 samples. In some of the rarer breeds there may not even be 500 dogs from which to get samples. Purebred dogs and their genes are the amazing resource necessary to find treatment and cures for 300 genetic diseases common to man and dog. To enact a law such as AB 1634 which would reduce and damage this resource is just plain wrong and does great harm to those medically compromised humans whose only hope is the canine genome and the geneticists who have been on a miraculous roll, with one new discovery after another. This also provides hope and treatment for sick dogs with the same genetic disease --- and all of this without a single sacrifice of a laboratory animal!!!! Legislators who support stem cell research should oppose this bill, which in cutting down or in some cases of the rarer breeds, eliminating, the major resources of this amazing research, would prevent the cures to many diseases of genetic origin that are common to man and dog, which are currently killing both. AB 1634 stands in the way of cures and a healthy future for those canines and humans afflicted with these diseases.

PUREBRED DOGS ARE NOT THE SOURCE OF SHELTER EUTHANASIAS

According to 4 scientific epidemiological studies done at four major universities (in Tennessee, Colorado, Tufts, and U.C. Davis) breeders were the least likely source of shelter euthanasia. This is so probably because most breeders check out the homes thoroughly before they sell puppies. They usually require new owners to attend puppy/kindergarten classes, to purchase a crate, and are available for advice along the way, and most require the owner to give them back the dog if it does not work out, and most especially, before discarding it or surrendering it to a shelter. Puppies from reputable breeders are socialized and adapt well into society, getting along with people and other dogs. This is the head start provided by the hobby breeder which makes owning a purebred dog important for me and for most of my friends.

AB 1634 IS A FIRST STEP IN THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF THE PUREBRED DOG

The animal rights movement has twelve tenets to which they adhere, and one of them is the complete elimination of breeding of purebred dogs and pedigree cats. AB 1634 is the first step in this overall goal. For more on this subject go to:

<http://www.pet-law.com/index.html> and: http://www.njabr.org/programs/animal_rights/

SPAY AND NEUTERING ARE NOT A ONE SIZE FITS ALL SUBJECT:

There are many reasons to oppose early neutering and spaying. It is required of public shelters by law. However, to impose these laws on privately owned animals is quite another thing. To learn about neutering and spaying in all of its ramifications, please check out:

www.caninesports.com as well as:

<http://www.naiaonline.org/pdfs/LongTermHealthEffectsOfSpayNeuterInDogs.pdf>

Again, to restate what Mrs. Strand has already said, I believe the decision when to spay or neuter for privately owned animals should rest solely with the owner and his/her veterinarian and strongly object to legal mandates dictated by a bill such as AB 1634.

While it is not spelled out in the proposed ordinance, most breed licenses require the owner to sign an agreement that local animal control may inspect the premises without warning and without a warrant. We consider this to be not only an invasion of privacy, but a violation of our Fourth Amendment rights. Even drug dealers have more rights than this.

For the above reasons and those put forth by Patti Strand, THE AMERICAN DOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION (ADOA) and I oppose AB 1634 and urge you to send letters to your elected representatives to do so as well.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ronald E. Cole,
Member and former Vice President of The American Dog Owners Association (ADOA), and
former Chair of their Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee
Board of Directors of TAC (The Animal Council)
Past Pres. San Francisco Dog Training Club, Member of the SFDTC Board of Directors
Former President of The Associated Obedience Clubs of Northern California