

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATE HUMANE ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST THE ASPCA WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

*Complaint Alleges that the ASPCA's Unfair and Deceptive Fundraising
Practices Harm Local Humane Societies and SPCAs*

El Cerrito, CA – The [State Humane Association of California](http://www.californiastatehumane.org) announced today that a complaint has been filed with the Office of the Attorney General against the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The complaint alleges that ASPCA's unfair and deceptive fundraising practices harm local humane societies and SPCAs by capitalizing on and reinforcing the widely-held mistaken belief that the ASPCA is a parent or umbrella organization to the thousands of humane societies and SPCAs across the country.

The ASPCA operates just one animal shelter and that shelter is in New York City. While it does fund projects in California, such expenditure is insignificant in comparison to the amount of money the organization raises in California. For example, according to the ASPCA, it received \$116.5 million in revenue in 2009. However, in 2010, California received a total of only \$352,100 from the ASPCA, or 0.3% of its revenue. California represents 13% of the national economy.

Many are familiar with the ASPCA's commercials featuring Grammy-award-winning musician, singer, and songwriter Sarah McLachlan and comedian Dan Aykroyd. The commercials feature heartbreaking images of abused and neglected animals as a backdrop to their compelling plea for donations. However, the commercials do not reveal that the ASPCA is not directly affiliated with any of the thousands of humane societies and SPCAs across the country.

"Ever since the ASPCA began to aggressively fundraise several years ago, humane societies and SPCAs throughout the country have suffered," explained Erica Gaudet Hughes, Executive Director of the State Humane Association of California. "Our member humane societies and SPCAs frequently report hearing from people who gave to the ASPCA believing they were giving to their local shelter. These shelters believe they are missing out on funds that were intended for them."

The State Humane Association of California does not take issue with the work that the ASPCA does, however. In fact, SHAC works with the ASPCA from time to time. Rather, SHAC simply wants the ASPCA to stop capitalizing on and reinforcing public confusion regarding its relationship to local SPCAs and humane societies. "Our member SPCAs and humane societies do not wish to stop the ASPCA from fulfilling its mission. They just want the public to understand that when they give to the ASPCA, local SPCAs and humane societies do not receive a direct or significant benefit."

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Contact: Erica Gaudet Hughes, Executive Director, State Humane Association of California
Tel: 510.525.2744 ext. 1
Email: ehughes@californiastatehumane.org

Founded in 1909, the State Humane Association of California represents the interests of California's humane societies and SPCAs, all of which are individually incorporated and not affiliated with any national animal-welfare groups. With 140 member organizations – humane societies, SPCAs, and animal control agencies throughout the state – the State Humane Association of California is in the unique position of having knowledge and insight regarding the specific issues that affect California's shelters and the communities they serve.