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Legislature Declares Shelter Pet as Official California State Pet

SACRAMENTO, CA – Last week the California State Legislature passed a concurrent resolution declaring the Shelter Pet as the official California State Pet. The resolution, ACR 56, was introduced by Assemblymember Eric Linder (R-Corona).

Each year, over 800,000 animals are taken in by California's public and private shelters, with fewer than half adopted into new homes. SPCA's, municipal animal shelters and humane societies often nurse severely sick animals back to health and are able to match them with permanent homes.

"Humane societies are often charged with nearly impossible tasks like reviving debilitated animals or placing them in homes with loving families," said Linder. "I hope by naming the Shelter Animal as California's State Pet, we can highlight great organizations like the Riverside County Department of Animal Services, and all the good work they do for our animals." Across the nation an estimated 3-4 million dogs and cats are euthanized each year. Although down from prior years, only about 30% of pets in homes are from shelters, leaving millions of shelter pets unadopted each year.

Assemblymember Linder was joined by several prominent individuals supporting ACR 56:

"We are so thrilled that California's shelter pets have gained official recognition by the Legislature. Sadly, many people are unaware of the tragic plight of shelter animals and their capacity for making wonderful companions. When people adopt from animal shelters, everyone wins: the animal gets a place to call home, the adopter gains a new family member, the burden on our overcrowded shelter system is eased, and each of us enjoys the benefits of living in a more compassionate society. We applaud Assemblymember Linder's leadership and commitment to our state's shelter pets."
~ **Erica Hughes, Executive Director, State Humane Association of California**

"I support shelter pets as the State pet for California. With millions of animals being euthanized in shelters across the nation they need all the attention we can provide to change these statistics once and for all."

~ **Russell Simmons, Co-Founder, Def Jam Records**

"In a state that ends over a half a million pets lives in our animal shelters each year, it seems critical to raise awareness and support programs and legislation that end this suffering of healthy adoptable pets. Making the "shelter pet" the official state pet is a great step in sending the message and making it official to always adopt your next companion animal."

~ **Judie Mancuso, President, Social Compassion in Legislation**

"I support the official state pet of California to be a shelter pet because of the over 8 million animals who enter US shelters every year only 35% of dogs and 37% of cats find a forever home. Making the state pet of California a shelter pet means more awareness and education to encourage people to adopt not shop and save a life at your local shelter."

~ **Katie Cleary, Actress and Producer**

“I strongly support a shelter pet as our state’s official animal. California has always led our nation as an example of forward thinking and other states look to us to set a great example. By making a shelter pet our official animal, we are saying that it’s time to stand up for animals in need and bring awareness to their plight.”

~ **Alison Eastwood, Actress and Producer**

“Shelters have pure breeds and ‘designer mutts’ with wonderful dispositions and big hearts. I hope everyone can be proud to adopt California’s State Pet!”

~ **Madeline Bernstein, President, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA)**

The Shelter Pet will join California’s 37 existing official symbols, ranging from the State Flower (the Golden Poppy) to the State Soil (the San Joaquin Soil).

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