

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor
MAYOR'S ANTI-ANIMAL ABUSE
ADVISORY COMMISSION



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

100 Holliday Street, Rm 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

CITY COUNCIL BILL 12-0101

TO: Members of the Health Committee

DATE: July 10, 2012

FROM: Caroline A. Griffin, Chair – Mayor’s Anti-Animal Abuse Advisory Commission *Coey*

RE: **City Council Bill 12-0101 – Animal Control and Protection – Licensing Private Kennels**

POSITION: OPPOSE

Chairman Curran, Vice-Chair Spector, and Members of the Health Committee, please be advised that the Mayor’s Anti-Animal Abuse Advisory Commission (“Commission”) opposes enactment of Council Bill 12-0101.

Earlier this year, the City Council enacted Council Bill 11-0766, Animal Control and Protection – Reconstitution. The Legislative Subcommittee of the Commission met with Assistant Solicitor Michael Schrock for over a year, to study, analyze, and comment on this sweeping legislation. At the time, the Commission recommended a repeal of the provisions for private kennel licenses (often referred to as a “Multi-Pet Permit”), the precise provision sought to be re-enacted in Council Bill 12-0101. While the pending bill may satisfy the demands of individual constituents and appears reasonable on its face, it will have the unintended consequence of reducing pet license sales and adoptions, and thus, is not in the best interest of animals.

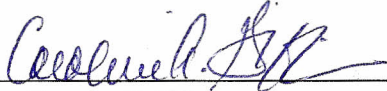
There are many households in Baltimore that care for three or more animals, particularly indoor cats, without incident. It has been established elsewhere that people will not purchase pet licenses to avoid drawing attention to the need for a kennel license. Currently, only a small percentage of pet owners in Baltimore have pet licenses and it is a stated goal of the City to increase this number. Pet licenses ensure that animals have been inoculated against rabies, help reunite lost animals with their owners, and provide critically needed revenue to open admission shelters, such as BARCS. Resurrecting the requirement for a kennel license, after a deliberate repeal of the requirement, will only frustrate these goals. For these reasons, other cities have repealed kennel license laws.

More significantly, the requirement for private kennel licenses will not only decrease the number of pet license sales, but will also decrease adoptions. Many potential adopters do not want to endure the burden of posting a large sign in their yard, attending a hearing, and paying fees, simply to own animals. Historically, some neighbors have opposed multi-pet permits as a pretext to furthering an agenda or dispute. Accordingly, responsible pet owners will not adopt more than two animals, even if they have the capacity and are financially able to do so, and more animals will languish in our already overcrowded shelters.

Finally, the provision is neither cost effective nor easy to enforce. Animal Enforcement Officers already have the authority to issue citations to citizens whose animals create a nuisance, such as for noise or waste.

For the foregoing reasons, the Mayor's Anti-Animal Abuse Advisory Commission respectfully opposes City Council Bill 12-0101.

Respectfully submitted,



Caroline A. Griffin
Chair, Mayor's Anti-Animal Abuse
Advisory Commission

Date

