



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Senate Appropriations Committee, Chair
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 1290 (LEE) SUPPORT

Dear Senator Portantino:

The Los Angeles District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 1290 (Lee).

Existing law provides a specific criminal penalty for theft of a dog but not for other types of pets. Because only dogs are specifically listed in Penal Code Section 491, there is some confusion regarding whether the theft of other types of pets was a crime because there are no other sections specifically listing other types of pets in California's theft statutes.

AB 1290 eliminates any potential confusion in California law by amending Penal Code Section 484 to provide that "personal property" includes, but is not limited to all companion animals. A "companion animal" is defined as meaning an animal including, but is not limited to, a dog or a cat, that a person keeps and provides care for as a household pet or otherwise for the purpose of companionship, emotional support, service, or protection.

While the law is well established that pets are considered personal property and are covered by California's general theft and grand theft statutes, it does make sense from a policy prospective to clarify that all companion animals are covered by our theft statutes.

When California created our modern Penal Code in 1898 it included section 491 dealing with dog theft. There have been dozens of bills enacted over the past 20 years that have updated and modernized various sections of the Penal Code. AB 1290 is another example of an update and modernization of our Penal Code.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE GASCÓN
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