

(Translation)

Motion on
“Protecting the rights and interests of animals”
moved by Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 16 January 2008

Motion as amended by Hon WONG Kwok-hing, Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee and Hon CHOY So-yuk

“That, although the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Bill 2006 was passed by this Council last year to increase the penalty for cruelty to animals, incidents of animal cruelty still continue to occur; in order to protect the rights and interests of animals, this Council urges the Government to adopt various measures to ensure that animals are protected under the law; the relevant measures should include:

- (a) comprehensively reviewing and amending the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, including reviewing the definition of cruelty to animals and making abandonment of animals an offence of animal cruelty;
- (b) improving the licensing and regulatory system for the sale and breeding of pets and consulting the public before amending the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance and the relevant regulations, extending the animal registration system to cover cats and other kinds of animals that are commonly kept as pets, improving the licensing and regulatory system for pet shops and breeding farms, introducing legislation to regulate the sources of animals for sale in pet shops, requiring that all such animals should come from licensed breeding farms, and stepping up enforcement actions against unlicensed breeding, so as to stop the entry of animals from unknown sources into the pet market;
- (c) enhancing the transparency of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department in its handling of stray dogs and cats, treating the animals kindly, abandoning the ‘Trap-and-Kill’ method, cooperating with community organizations in jointly promoting the ‘Trap-Neuter-Return’ programme, and using humane means to deal with the problem of stray dogs and cats, with a view to reducing their number in the community;
- (d) requiring law enforcement officers to actively handle the reports on cruelty to animals from the public, considering drawing on overseas experience to set up ‘animal police’ teams specially tasked to investigate cases of animal cruelty and abandonment, and rigorously enforcing the law to curb the situation of animal cruelty and abandonment from becoming prevalent;
- (e) studying the provision of places at suitable locations for animals to move around, including providing more parks and leisure venues which are accessible to dogs and cats;

- (f) actively identifying suitable locations for the provision of public toilets for dogs, so as to make available suitable places for dogs to toilet and improve the environmental hygiene of streets;
- (g) actively identifying suitable locations for placing dog excreta collection bins in areas or streets where public toilets for dogs cannot be provided, and increasing the frequency of cleaning and washing to improve environmental hygiene;
- (h) regulating by licensing hospice service for animals;
- (i) improving the situation of fragmentation of responsibilities in dealing with the rights and interests of animals, and clearly designating a responsible department to avoid confusion over the implementation of policies;
- (j) advising pet shops and private/domestic pet breeders that when selling pets to prospective pet keepers, the former should follow the practice of animal groups in dog adoption by confirming that the deeds of mutual covenant of the buildings where the dog keepers live state that the keeping of dogs is not objected to, so as to reduce the chance of the dogs concerned being abandoned in the future;
- (k) further educating the public on the concept of animal care and responsible pet ownership, and providing incentives to encourage people to arrange their pets to undergo sterilization and regular physical examinations;
- (l) ensuring that all dogs are implanted with microchips to fully implement the existing statutory requirements, thereby enabling the relevant authorities to track down the owners of the abandoned dogs according to the stored information and enforcing the penalties; and
- (m) further educating the public to, before proceeding to keep dogs, carefully consider and ascertain that the deeds of mutual covenant of the buildings where they live state that the keeping of dogs is not objected to and to truly behave as responsible pet owners, so as to reduce the chance of the dogs concerned being abandoned in the future.”