



Testimony

of

**Daniel Kass**

**Acting Deputy Commissioner, Division of Environmental Health  
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

before the

**New York City Council Committee on State and Federal Legislation**

regarding

**A 6158-A/ S 4278: Creating an Animal Population Control Fund and the Animal  
Population Control Program**

April 28, 2010

250 Broadway  
New York

Good morning Chairperson Foster and members of the Committee on State and Federal Legislation. My name is Daniel Kass, Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Environmental Health at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). On behalf of Commissioner Farley I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Assembly Bill 6158A and Senate Bill 4278.

Assembly Bill 6158A and Senate Bill 4278 would amend the New York State Agriculture and Market Law and the Administrative Code of the City of New York to establish an animal population control fund and a New York City animal population control program. This program would provide low cost spay and neuter services for the pets of low-income New Yorkers. We believe that increasing the ability for voluntary sterilization of owned pets will reduce the number of animals entering the City's shelters and therefore reduce the number of animals that are euthanized.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene contracts with New York City Animal Care and Control (AC&C) to operate the animal shelter system. AC&C is required by our contract to sterilize dogs and cats that are adopted out of the shelters, but it does not have sufficient funding to provide or subsidize spay and neuter services for pets belonging to the general public. One reason that funding is lacking for spay and neuter services at AC&C is that under the current state law, which was enacted in 1995, only private veterinarians are eligible for reimbursement from the state's animal population control fund and excluded veterinarians in a shelter. This bill would enable the Department to establish a NYC Animal Population Control Program to be funded by a newly created NYC Animal Population Control Fund. The Fund would receive \$3 from the fees paid for each license purchased by owners of dogs older than four months of age that are not spayed or neutered.

At the current time, AC&C relies on partnerships with other entities such as ASPCA to provide public spay and neuter services; however, with funding AC&C would be able to do much more. With the support of the Fund, the Department and AC&C would be able to reestablish and expand mobile clinic operations to provide thousands of spay and neuter operations each year using this sustainable funding stream that is currently unavailable for these

purposes. The creation of the NYC Animal Population Control Program and access to the Fund will provide more direct services to the public and allow for responsible and humane care necessary for the animals in New York City. Accordingly, we ask the City Council for their support of this legislation.

Thanks you for this opportunity to testify. I am happy to take any questions.

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