[Supporting California Assembly Bill 1825 (Gordon and Maienschein) - Removing the “Vicious” Label from Dogs Seized from Convicted Dog Fighters]

Resolution supporting Assembly Bill 1825, introduced by Assembly Members Gordon and Maienschein, removing the outdated provision in California law that unfairly condemns puppies and dogs seized in connection with convicted animal fighting cases as “vicious.”

WHEREAS, San Francisco is a leader in promoting and supporting the humane treatment of dogs, and dogs are very important to the residents of the City and are an integral part of their community; and

WHEREAS, California law currently requires that all puppies and dogs seized from convicted dog fighters, including dogs who may be seized in the City and County of San Francisco, be arbitrarily and unfairly deemed “vicious;” and

WHEREAS, Under this requirement, local animal shelters are given no latitude to evaluate whether or not the dogs may actually pose any risk to public safety; and

WHEREAS, The “vicious” label condemns dogs to a life of strict confinement, which sadly almost always results in these canine victims being euthanized; and

WHEREAS, Many dogs seized in connection with animal fighting – who can be puppies, bait dogs, stolen pets, breeding mothers, or other dogs who would thrive in a loving, supportive environment – do not pose any risk to other dogs or humans; and

WHEREAS, When an animal officer rescues a dog from a life of fear and fighting, it is his or her hope that a new beginning awaits the canine survivor; and

WHEREAS, Animal shelters often want to give a dog or puppy seized as a victim of animal fighting cruelty an opportunity to live cruelty-free life; and

Supervisors Breed, Campos
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WHEREAS, The vast majority of states give canine victims of cruelty a chance for adoption or rehabilitation by subjecting them to the same individual health and behavioral assessments as any other dog brought into an animal shelter; and

WHEREAS, Trained shelter personnel routinely evaluate all incoming dogs individually for their suitability for adoption, placement with a rescue organization, or another humane disposition, using techniques developed over years by animal sheltering professionals; and

WHEREAS, Many of the dogs seized in connection with animal fighting in other states have gone on to live healthy, happy lives, and some have even become therapy or service dogs; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 1825 (AB 1825), jointly authored by State Assembly Members Rich Gordon and Brian Maienschein, and coauthored by nearly two dozen other state legislators, permits California animal shelters to preserve public safety and to protect seized canine victims of animal fighting by allowing these dogs to receive the same individual health and behavioral assessments as other dogs who are taken in by such shelters; and

WHEREAS, AB 1825 removes an outdated provision of California law that arbitrarily and unfairly condemns dogs and puppies seized in connection with convicted animal fighting cases as "vicious," giving these canine victims a chance to live happy lives, with humane euthanasia being the last resort instead of a forgone conclusion; and


WHEREAS, California’s animal shelters, including those located in the City and County of San Francisco, should be supported by their communities and their government, and
afforded the ability to follow best practices to assess the behavior and health of all dogs entering the shelters, including seized canine victims of animal fighting; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco condemns illegal dog fighting and is unwavering in its support for laws and policies that ensure the humane treatment of dogs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco strongly supports Assembly Bill 1825 and urges the California State Legislature and Governor to pass it; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby directs the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of this Resolution to the Governor of California, the California State Assembly, and the California State Senate.
Resolution supporting Assembly Bill 1825, introduced by Assembly Members Gordon and Maienschein, removing the outdated provision in California law that unfairly condemns puppies and dogs seized in connection with convicted animal fighting cases as "vicious."

March 15, 2016 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Peskin, Tang, Wiener and Yee

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 3/15/2016 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board