



INDIANA RETAIL DOG AND CAT PURCHASERS TO SUBSIDIZE “COMPANION ANIMAL STERILIZATION FUND”

**** \$50 SURCHARGE TO BE COLLECTED BY RETAIL PET
MERCHANTS ON SALES OF UNSTERILIZED DOGS AND CATS ****

The Issue:

Indiana [House Bill 1331](#) establishes the “Companion Animal Sterilization Fund”. The fund will be bankrolled by fees imposed on purchasers of unsterilized cats and dogs at retail, and by increasing fees collected from the annual pet food and specialty pet food inspection. Monies from the fund will reimburse veterinary services rendered by veterinarians who participate in the “Companion Animal Sterilization Program”, also created by this bill. Veterinarians who participate in the program will be reimbursed for furnishing free spaying or neutering services on a dog or a cat owned by a Medicaid recipient.

The Impact:

“Companion Animal Sterilization Fund”

The Indiana companion animal sterilization fund is established for the purpose of receiving money for reimbursement of veterinary services providers that perform spaying or neutering services of companion animals on behalf of Medicaid recipients. This legislation increases the, already in place, pet food and specialty pet food annual inspection fee collected from distributors who sell pet food in packages of 10 pounds or less. The inspection fee is currently \$50 and this legislation raises it to \$80, in which \$30 will be paid into the fund.

HB 1331 also creates the “companion animal sterilization service fee”, in which any person who purchases an unsterilized companion animal in a retail transaction is liable for a \$50 fee for each unsterilized companion animal acquired in the retail transaction. The retail merchant who sells the unsterilized companion animal will be responsible for collecting the fee from the purchaser.

HB 1331 also adds the fund as a tax credit so that an individual may choose to contribute all or part of his/her income tax refund to the fund.

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC strongly supports efforts to make spay and neuter services available to pet owners who need them. The cost of such services, however, should not be borne solely by pet stores and their customers. Such a mandate will only raise the price of dogs and place additional, undue burdens on retail merchants by imposing the duty to collect, administer and submit fees.

Recommended Action:

HB 1331 has been referred to the [House Committee on Commerce, Small Business & Economic Development](#). A hearing has not yet been set. We urge everyone affected by this bill to contact committee members ([Dave Cheatham](#), [Wesley Culver](#), [Bill Davis](#), [Nancy Dembowski](#), [Sue Ellspermann](#), [Kathy Heuer](#), [Rebecca Kubacki](#), [Mark Messmer](#), [Scott Reske](#), [Steve Stemler](#), [Mary Ann Sullivan](#), [Jerry R. Torr](#), [Shelli VanDenBurgh](#)) with concerns and questions. You may wish to make the following points:

- The fee imposed by this bill on the retail sale of dogs and cats is excessive, far exceeding any such fee in the U.S.
- Pet stores are already highly regulated, and this would simply impose additional responsibilities.
- Research shows that pet store puppies represent a very small percentage of dogs relinquished to shelters. Pet stores, which are also a relatively small source of all dogs (approximately 6 percent) should not be singled out to bear this cost.

For updates on this legislation, check the PIJAC website, www.pijac.org, regularly. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact PIJAC's Bambi Nicole Osborne at 202-452-1525 or via email at Bambi@pijac.org.