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**Irvine Citizens to be Deprived
of Pets, Circuses, and Rodeos**

(Washington, D.C.) A newly formed coalition of organizations has called upon the City Council to reject a proposal which denies Irvine, California residents the right to buy pets or attend events that involve the exhibition of animals, such as circuses and rodeos. While the City Council awaits final language of this proposal, the most recent draft offers no standards of care for animals nor demands responsible animal stewardship. Its language is couched only in prohibitions, on selling, delivering, giving away or transferring pet animals. In addition, it prohibits conducting any rodeo or circus “or any other similar exhibition or activity” within Irvine. If proponents are successful, these popular activities, which are available nationwide, would suddenly cease to exist in Irvine.

The coalition believes that the proposed ban is out-of-sync with the views of most citizens, who support the right to have pets and participate in exhibitions. The activities being banned by the proposal are already heavily regulated under federal and state law, which subjects such activities to appropriate licensure and oversight. Pet owners and other citizens of Irvine are being urged to contact elected members on the City Council to voice their strong object to such a radical ban.

Numerous objections to this proposed ban have been raised. While it penalizes Irvine’s citizens by denying access to popular activities and purchasing a pet inside city limits, it would not stop people from crossing over into other jurisdictions to do exactly that. As a result, the city’s tax base will suffer, and economic opportunities will be lost. The city’s tax dollars would be used in a costly legal battle to defend an ordinance that does not benefit the citizens of Irvine or the animals in that jurisdiction.

In addition, questions about the constitutionality of the proposal abound. Though adoptions of bans such as this are rare in the United States, legal challenges have been raised in other jurisdictions considering the same extreme restrictions.

“Those charged with the care of animals, in whatever capacity, have a duty to ensure they are treated humanely,” said Michael Maddox, Vice President or Government Affairs and General Counsel of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council. “But a proposal to ban animals does nothing to advance animal welfare,” he insisted, “It merely deprives all people in Irvine from the opportunity to enjoy animals responsibly in a myriad of settings.” The coalition plans to testify before the City Council emphasizing that this proposal is being championed by extremists who oppose human interaction with animals as a matter of principle.

The Animal Welfare Council is dedicated to advancing the responsible and humane use of animals in recreation, entertainment, sport and industry.

The Outdoor Business Amusement Association encourages the growth and preservation of the outdoor amusement industry through leadership, legislation, education, and membership services.

The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) provides its members a voice in state and national legislative issues through advocacy and timely information regarding upcoming policy issues that affect the pet industry, pet owners, and the animals they care for. Join PIJAC today at www.pijac.org.

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