



RICHLAND COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA CONSIDERING PET LIMIT LAW

**** COULD LIMIT HOUSEHOLDS AND BREEDERS TO 3 PETS ****

**** COUNCIL PROPOSING BAN ON CERTAIN SNAKES ****

The Issue:

A [proposed animal care ordinance](#) is currently being considered in the Richland County Council Development and Services Committee. As proposed, the ordinance limits the number of pets to three per household in all locations within the unincorporated areas of the county. The proposed ordinance also provides a list of animals that are banned for ownership and/or sale, including certain snakes and lizards. The committee has a meeting scheduled for December 20th in which the proposed ordinance could be considered.

The Impact:

The proposal restricts the total number of pets that can be owned per household to three. It states “this total can be reached with any combination of “pets”. “Pets” is defined as “any domestic dog and/or domestic cat”. This restriction is applicable to all households located within unincorporated areas of the county. There will be no limit on the number of pets in areas of the county zoned as “rural”. **However, there is no exemption for breeders, meaning that those located in areas not zoned rural would also be prohibited from having more than 3 dogs or cats, combined.** There will be a six month “grandfather” period from the adoption date of the ordinance to allow compliance with the number of pets’ restriction.

If adopted, this proposal would make it unlawful for any person to sell, own, keep, harbor or act as a custodian to certain constricting snakes, venomous snakes and certain lizards over two feet long. For the complete list, please read the [text of proposal](#).

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC supports reasonable standards of care for the breeding and housing and of pet animals, as well laws necessary to protect the public health and safety. Limiting the number of pets per household does nothing to advance these goals, per se. The number of pets in a household provides no measure of the level or quality of care such animals receive. Breeders, particularly, should be expected in many cases to possess more than the limit imposed by this ordinance.

Recommended Action:

According to committee staff, amendments are still being made to the proposal. We urge pet lovers, and specifically anyone affected by this proposal, to **contact the committee immediately to express concerns and to raise appropriate questions:**

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If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact PIJAC's Bambi Nicole Osborne at 202-452-1525 or via email at Bambi@pijac.org.