

**California Animal Welfare Action Weeks**

**Animals Can't Wait — Help Introduce Life-Saving Bills by Feb 20**

**Take Action Today**

Contact your elected legislator and share your story — explain how the animal crisis is impacting your community and why urgent solutions are needed now.

Questions? Email us: [info@animalrescuersforchange.org](mailto:info@animalrescuersforchange.org)

ANIMAL RESCUERS FOR CHANGE

## Fixing California's Animal Crisis Three Prevention-First Bills — Ready to Move, Waiting for Legislative Champions

California is facing an escalating animal overpopulation crisis. Shelters are overcrowded, euthanasia is rising, rescues are beyond capacity, and communities are absorbing the emotional and financial cost. This year, our coalition has taken concrete action to address the root causes.

### Where Things Stand — Right Now

- Three bills have been prepared and entered into the Legislative Counsel system
- We are currently holding **Zoom meetings** with multiple legislators from both the **Assembly and Senate**
- A comprehensive **legislative brief** prepared by our coalition was distributed to **all California Assembly and Senate offices**

- Many offices are now scheduling follow-up meetings with us

### The challenge: securing primary bill authors.

Several legislators have already indicated they will **support and co-author** once a lead author is identified. However, legislators are now finalizing their bill portfolios (limited to **16 bills per legislator**), making this a **critical and time-sensitive window**.

We have until **February 20** to secure authors.

This weekend, we are launching **mass constituent campaigns** asking Californians to contact their district representatives and urge them to step forward as bill authors.

### The Three Bills We're Advancing

All three proposals are **modeled on prior bills that failed multiple times** — not because the ideas were flawed, but because they lacked sustained leadership. The need is now greater than ever.

## 1 Establish a California Spay-Neuter Fund

### Prevention First

#### The Problem

California spends approximately **\$460 million per year** operating about **153 public animal shelters**, yet invests very little in prevention. Without spay-neuter access, unplanned litters continue to flood shelters, communities leading to overcrowding and euthanasia of adoptable animals.

#### The Solution

Create a **dedicated California Spay-Neuter Fund** to reduce intake before animals ever enter the shelter system.

#### Why It Works

- A **\$30–\$64 million annual investment** over 15 years matches the scale of California's need
- Prevention is **far less expensive** than sheltering and euthanasia
- **Five other states** already operate successful spay-neuter funds

#### Why Now

- This proposal was previously introduced multiple times (last in 2024–25) but never received a full hearing
- California regularly ranks among the **highest animal kill states**
- **66% of Californians** share their homes with companion animals

**Bottom line:** Without prevention, shelter spending is fiscally unsustainable and morally untenable.

## 2 Backyard Breeding & Shelter Overcrowding Prevention

### Updated "Bowie's Law"

#### The Problem

Unregulated backyard breeding and poor visibility of shelter animals are major drivers of overpopulation. Current laws fail to capture repeat and high-volume breeders operating just below enforcement thresholds.

#### The Solution

A renewed bill modeled on **Bowie's Law (AB 1482)** to close loopholes and slow the pipeline into shelters and communities.

#### Key Provisions

- Stronger regulation of backyard and small-scale breeders
  - Microchipping, vaccinations, and basic health standards
- Lower thresholds to capture repeat back yard breeders

- Require shelters to publicly list **all adoptable and impounded animals**
- Direct the state to study shelter overcrowding and adoption visibility

## Momentum

- The prior bill stalled despite **no registered opposition**
- Last year statewide campaign generated **thousands of constituent messages**
- Key stakeholders have expressed support, creating real opportunity in 2026
- This proposal was previously introduced multiple times (last in 2024–25) but never received a full hearing

## 3 Public Shelter Transparency & Data Accountability

### The Problem

California lacks a **uniform, public system** for shelter intake and outcome reporting. Policymakers and the public cannot clearly see what is happening in publicly funded shelters.

### The Solution

A transparency bill modeled on **AB 631** to standardize reporting and accountability.

### What the Bill Would Do

- Require all publicly funded shelters to publish **standardized quarterly data**
- Ensure public access for **at least 5 years (ideally 10)**
- Focus accountability on **government-funded agencies**
- Provide a clear framework for **rescue data aggregation, Not Rescue mandates**

### Why Rescues Matter — and What We're Asking For

California is home to **3,000+ registered rescue organizations** that play a critical role in the animal welfare safety net. Every year, rescues **divert thousands of animals from public shelters**, accept community intakes, and **save up to 20% of shelter animals statewide** — often stepping in where shelters no longer have space or resources.

Rescues are **partners in public safety**, not the problem. What they need is **equitable treatment and a uniform, reasonable data exchange system — not prosecution, retaliation, or excessive barriers** that block lifesaving work.

Our proposal supports:

- A **simple, non-burdensome quarterly form** for rescues, that includes '**Community intake**' category
- **Uniform data standards** that allow aggregation and transparency
- Protection for **volunteer-run organizations** from unnecessary compliance strain
- A framework that **strengthens animal safety** while preventing animal dumping by bad-actor hoarding groups
- **Guardrails that target abuse without punishing responsible rescues or enabling shelter overreach**

This approach ensures accountability **without discouraging lifesaving work**, supports collaboration instead of conflict, and helps California finally see the full picture of animal outcomes statewide.

### What We Need Now

We've done the policy work. We have legislative interest. We have co-sponsors ready.

### What we urgently need are champions.

As bill portfolios are finalized, this is a narrow window. **Without primary authors, these solutions risk stalling once again — despite broad support and worsening conditions on the ground.**

### How You Can Help

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your <b>Assemblymember and Senator</b></li> <li>• Ask them to <b>author one of these bills</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share our constituent campaigns when they go live</li> <li>• Help elevate this moment — timing matters</li> </ul>
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**These are not new ideas.** They are **unfinished business** — and the cost of inaction is now visible in every California community.

**Find Your Legislators, and their contacts, YOUR VOICE MATTERS:** [https://animalrescuesforchange.org/contact\\_legislators/](https://animalrescuesforchange.org/contact_legislators/)

 **Rescues:** Join our Team for more impact: <https://animalrescuesforchange.org/join-the-mission/>

 **Supporters:** Sign up for updates and action calls: <https://animalrescuesforchange.org/contact/>

 **Questions:** Email: [info@animalrescuesforchange.org](mailto:info@animalrescuesforchange.org)