

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATORS RATH, MILLS, WALTER, DIXON, FUDOLI and HARDWICK**

Re: Opposing New York State Surcharge for Spay and Neutering Dogs

WHEREAS, the State of New York, Department of Agriculture, has always imposed a three dollar surcharge to be added to the license fee for un-spayed and un-neutered dogs; and

WHEREAS, this three dollar surcharge, paid by owners of intact dogs, was then used to control dog populations by funding spay/neuter programs, thereby putting the cost of such programs on those who choose to keep their dogs intact; and

WHEREAS, responsible dog owners who have sterilized their dogs through spaying or neutering were therefore able to enjoy a reduced licensing fee, exempt from spay/neuter fees of any kind; and

WHEREAS, the State of New York, Department of Agriculture, as of January 1, 2011 has transferred dog licensing to the local government level, while maintaining the original three dollar spay and neuter fee, now called a spay/neuter surcharge; and

WHEREAS, the State of New York, Department of Agriculture, is now imposing a new spay and neuter surcharge of one dollar to be added to the license fee of each altered dog; and

WHEREAS, imposing a spay and neuter surcharge is a disincentive to maintaining a dog license, encouraging unlicensed dogs; and

WHEREAS, dog licensing, among other purposes, helps to control vector-borne diseases, such as rabies, by insuring that licensed dogs are vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, New York State has decreased funding for programs to prevent vector-borne diseases; and

WHEREAS, it is counterintuitive and a public health risk to disincentivise licensing dogs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature opposes the imposition of a new spay/neuter surcharge meant for owners who have responsibly sterilized their dogs, thereby contributing to the control of the State of New York's dog population and vector-borne diseases; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and the local delegation to the New York State Legislature.

Fiscal Impact: None for Erie County taxpayers.