

Mandatory spay/neuter ordinance is misguided proposal

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If the [Chicago City Council](#) decides to pass a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance, it would be practicing veterinary medicine without a license—to the detriment of Chicago's pets. This approach, which is backed by a few vocal animal-rights activists, has never proven successful. Such laws fail because they violate the cardinal rule of good public policy: They cast a net so broad they punish responsible, law-abiding citizens right along with the law breakers, thereby lowering overall licensing compliance rates and revenues.

If Chicago lawmakers want to eliminate dangerous dog attacks, the key lies in the opposite approach: identifying the actual lawbreakers and holding them accountable by enforcing meaningful penalties.

There is no reason to expect that current law-breakers will comply with a new law. The proposed ordinance would simply compound the problem by pushing responsible pet owners underground and out of the licensing system.

Furthermore, there is no evidence linking spaying or neutering to calmer behavior in dogs. To the contrary, research has found that castrated animals were more likely to be fearful, sensitive to handling and aggressive.

We stand with other reputable organizations like the Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association, Chicago Veterinary Medical Association, American Kennel Club and Cat Fanciers' Association in opposing this misguided proposal. It is hoped that the Chicago City Council will work with the good pet stewards in the community to identify a workable solution, focusing its efforts on heightened enforcement and responsible pet owner education, instead of punishing good citizens for the activities of criminals.

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