

1 [Promoting the Responsible Acquisition of Dogs in the City and County of San Francisco]

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3 **Resolution supporting the responsible acquisition of dogs in the City and County of**
4 **San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, San Francisco is a leader in promoting and supporting the humane
7 treatment of companion animals, and dogs are very important to the residents of the City and
8 County of San Francisco and are an integral part of their community culture; and

9 WHEREAS, San Franciscans can choose to adopt dogs through animal shelters and
10 rescue organizations or to purchase companion animals from pet stores or online breeders;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, breeders who sell dogs to pet stores or to individuals online vary greatly in
13 their care and treatment of animals and breeding practices; and

14 WHEREAS, responsible breeders are individuals who have focused their efforts on one
15 or a select few breeds through historical research and ongoing study, and who provide dogs
16 with adequate food, water, veterinary care, shelter and opportunity for exercise; and

17 WHEREAS, puppy mills are dog breeding facilities that place profits ahead of the
18 welfare of animals, often resulting in serious violations of animal care standards; and

19 WHEREAS, documented problems at puppy mills include over breeding, inadequate
20 veterinary care, poor quality of food and shelter, lack of human socialization and overcrowded
21 cages, which often results in severe illness and behavioral problems for the dogs housed in
22 these conditions; and

23 WHEREAS, in addition to these aforementioned issues, over one million dogs and cats
24 enter California's shelters each year, and over half of them are euthanized due to a lack of
25 available homes for the animals; and

1 WHEREAS, the national breeding rate of dogs exceeds the number of homes presently
2 available to dogs, and thus puppy mills are significant contributors to pet overpopulation; and

3 WHEREAS, based on estimates from the California Department of Health Services and
4 the City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services, local governments in California spend
5 more than \$250 million of taxpayer dollars each year to collect, house, control and euthanize
6 unwanted animals; and

7 WHEREAS, key benefits to the residents of the City and County of San Francisco of
8 refusing to support puppy mills include the protection of scarce taxpayer dollars through lower
9 animal-control costs and reductions to risks to animal welfare and in public safety associated
10 with pet overpopulation; and

11 WHEREAS, depriving puppy mills of such support also represents a critical step
12 towards freeing the City and County of San Francisco and our nation more generally from
13 cruel breeding practices that place greater value on profits than animal welfare and also
14 reducing pet overpopulation; and

15 WHEREAS, despite San Francisco's commitment to animal rights, its residents often
16 unwittingly support puppy mills because the large majority of dogs purchased from pet stores
17 and online breeders come from puppy mills with deplorable living conditions; and

18 WHEREAS, if a San Francisco resident chooses not to adopt a dog from an animal
19 shelter or rescue organization, and instead purchases a dog, the resident can and should help
20 ensure that he or she is dealing with a responsible breeder by visiting the breeder's facilities
21 and observing the behavior and level of socialization of a dog prior to purchase, thereby
22 helping to hold breeders to a high standard of care and service to both animals and
23 consumers; and

1 WHEREAS, San Francisco dog guardians should be supported by their community and
2 their government promoting their ability to acquire dogs in a responsible manner; now,
3 therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That in order to contribute to the fight against animal cruelty and to
5 recognize the huge social and monetary cost to taxpayers of pet overpopulation in our society,
6 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors encourages those seeking pet companionship to
7 adopt from local shelters and rescue organizations; and, be it

8 FURTHER RESOLVED, That when acquiring an animal, the San Francisco Board of
9 Supervisors encourages consumers to educate themselves about the conditions in which
10 dogs are bred and housed, in order to avoid puppy mills and to support reputable breeders
11 who showcase their responsible practices and adhere to a high quality of care, commensurate
12 with the valuable role that dogs play in the City and County of San Francisco; and, be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby supports
14 and encourages responsible and humane pet acquisition practices and affirms its commitment
15 to pursuing policies that achieve political and social support for responsible breeding and that
16 help ensure that all pets are bred and raised in healthy conditions.