



NEW MEXICO'S SPECIAL PET CARE REGISTRATION PLATES (SPAY/NEUTER LICENSE PLATES)

*Amending Language in the Existing Law to Increase Proceeds
for Local Spay/Neuter Programs and Enhance the Distribution Process*
Senate Bill 185 — Sponsor Sen. Mary Jane García

THE PROBLEM:

- ✘ The distribution process and amount of proceeds directed to local spay/neuter programs is severely hampered by the current wording of the "Special Pet Care Registration Plates" law.
 - When the authorizing law was passed in 2003, there was no appropriate animal-related state fund to which revenue-sharing distributions could be directed.
 - Consequently, the distribution formula currently diverts to the State Road Fund 53% of the \$35 fee paid by residents for this special license plate.
 - Only \$6.30 out of each \$35 plate fee is actually designated for local spay/neuter programs.
 - Since the plate became available for purchase in 2006, no monies have been able to be distributed to local spay/neuter programs because of the cumbersome distribution process.
 - A large portion of proceeds is thus unavailable to local spay/neuter programs to help stem dog and cat overpopulation in our state (New Mexico's animal shelters euthanized over 67,000 companion animals in 2007).

THE SOLUTION:

- ✔ Amend language in New Mexico's Special Pet Care Registration Plates law, NMSA 1978 § 66-3-424.3 Paragraph D(2), to improve the process of distributing proceeds of plate sales and increase the percentage of proceeds directed into local spay/neuter programs.
 - Thanks to the passage of the Animal Sheltering Services Act in 2007, New Mexico now has the Animal Care and Facility Fund, to which revenue-sharing distributions can and should be directed.
 - Revise language to direct that all fees generated by pet care plate sales in excess of the \$10 administrative fee retained by the Motor Vehicle Department be distributed and appropriated to the Animal Care and Facilities Fund.
 - The Animal Care and Facility Fund is overseen by the Animal Sheltering Services Board, which is part of the State Regulation and Licensing Department.
 - The Animal Sheltering Services Board can allocate funds from license plate sales directly to the local spay/neuter groups providing services in the appropriate counties.

Benefits to Communities:

Enhanced spay/neuter programs, resulting in fewer stray animals, will help ease financial limitations of overburdened animal control and public safety budgets in communities statewide. New Mexico residents will have more incentive to purchase spay/neuter license plates if they are confident that proceeds from plate sales are effectively directed to the programs they were designed to help.

For more information contact Heather Ferguson 505-264-3854 or heather@apvnm.org.