

Pet overpopulation relief on the way

Written by Staff Reports
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Low-cost spay/neuter services, shelter funds

SANTA FE - Help in keeping spay and neuter costs down has arrived in the form of Senate Bill 57, signed into law March 6 by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

SB 57, sponsored by Sen. Jacob Candelaria, D-Albuquerque, and Rep. Joanne Ferrary, D-Las Cruces, will cover the costs of spay and neuter services for low-income families and deliver funds to struggling animal shelters around the state.

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To fund the programs, pet food manufacturers with an annual gross revenue of \$3 million or more will pay a \$100 fee per year for dog food, cat food, and pet treat brands sold in New Mexico after a 3-year phase-in. This fee is on par with what these companies pay in several other states. The fee does not apply to livestock feed or any other animal feed, prescription diets, nor does it directly affect retailers, or consumers.

“This law is going to be a game changer for humane treatment of dogs and cats in our communities. With statewide access to low cost spay and neuter, soon less resources will need to be spent on caring for overpopulation problems. We will eventually be able to provide better care for pets that are lost, injured or need re-homing,” Ferrary said.

More than 100,000 dogs and cats enter New Mexico’s animal shelters every year. Every year more than 20,000 dogs and cats are euthanized. In addition to saving animal lives and saving families from heartbreak, SB 57 will save money for all New Mexicans. Animal control and sheltering costs our communities more than \$51 million per year and at least \$38 million of these costs are paid by taxpayer dollars.

Senate Bill 57 becomes effective July 1, 2020.