



California Public Defenders Association
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April 8, 2016

Honorable Nick Schultz
Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: ASSEMBLY BILL 2344 (Haney) – **OPPOSE**
SET FOR HEARING APRIL 14, 2026

Dear Assemblymember Schultz,

The California Public Defenders Association (CPDA), a statewide organization of public defenders, private defense counsel, and investigators, regrets to inform you that we must oppose Assembly Bill 2344 (“AB 2344”) by Assemblymember Haney.

AB 2344 would create an animal abuse registry requiring individuals convicted of animal abuse to register with their local law enforcement and provide a statement in writing providing name, address, date of birth, employment, and date of animal abuse conviction, fingerprints and photograph for 10 years. Most of the information with the exception of the employer’s name and address would be posted on the internet and publicly available. Failure to register would be punishable by a misdemeanor.

AB 2344 is similar to SB 1277 (2010) which was held in Senate Appropriations.

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Rogers, 27, Santa Cruz County*

While we believe that protecting animals is a worthy goal, AB 2344 is bad public policy which would do more harm than good. CPDA opposes AB 2344 for many of the same reasons that are noted by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Founded in 1866 in New York City, it is the first and most well-established humane organization in the country. (<https://www.aspca.org/about-us>) Animal abuse registries are expensive, inefficient, and ineffective tools that fail to provide real protection for animals. (<https://www.aspca.org/about-us/aspca-policy-and-position-statements/position-statement-animal-abuser-registries>) They divert resources from more effective strategies which include education and more emphasis on enforcement of existing animal cruelty laws.

ASPCA elaborates:

“Cost estimates for establishing and running an animal abuse registry vary widely. Several proposed animal abuse registries were dropped following assessments of the costs to establish, update and provide access to the registry information. A fiscal impact statement for a 2011 proposed Virginia registry estimated costs at \$1 million. Costs of a proposed California registry were estimated anywhere from \$750,000 to \$2 million. (*ed. Referring to the proposed 2010 registry contemplated by SB 1277.*) Costs of a proposed registry in Washington State were estimated to be \$468,000 for the initial year and \$271,000 in subsequent years. Existing registries require those mandated to register to pay a fee, usually \$50-100 annually. Given the typically low number of individuals that are required to register in jurisdictions with registries, these fees are insufficient to cover the enormous cost of the registries themselves, thereby requiring the diversion of critical resources away from other, more productive means of protecting animals from cruelty.”

For individuals and their families the unintended consequence is that it would make it more difficult for them to obtain housing and employment even though the bill has penalties for misusing the registry to deny such necessities. Given the lack of affordable housing, the practical effect is that individuals on the registry will be at a higher risk of being homeless.

For these reasons, on behalf of CPDA, we respectfully urge your “NO” vote when AB 2344 comes before you in the Assembly Public Safety Committee unless it is amended to address our concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact Margo George at 510-967-3586 or at margogorge9@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

The image shows three handwritten signatures in blue ink. From left to right: a signature that appears to be 'Lesli Caldwell Houston', a signature that clearly reads 'Margo George', and a signature that appears to be 'Yarrow Neubert'.

Margo George, Lesli Caldwell Houston & Yarrow Neubert, Co-Chairs CPDA Legislative Committee

cc: Assemblymember Haney