

April 8, 2026

Assemblymember Schultz  
Chair, Public Safety Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 111  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2344 (Haney) - OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Schultz and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, I write in opposition to AB 2344 (Haney), which would create an animal abuse registry for adults convicted of felony animal cruelty, require individuals convicted of serious animal abuse to register with local enforcement for 10 years, and require the Department of Justice to post information about such individuals on a public website.

For over 100 years, the San Francisco Public Defender's Office has provided dedicated and passionate legal representation to people who are charged with a crime and unable to afford an attorney. Our mission is to protect and defend the rights of our clients through effective, vigorous, compassionate, and creative legal advocacy.

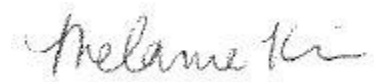
All people and animals deserve to be free from abuse and cruelty. However, AB 2344 doubles down on registration, which is costly and has been unsuccessful at preventing violence. In the case of California's sex registry, local authorities spend large amounts of time processing paperwork of people who have not committed a crime for years and don't pose a risk.<sup>1</sup> The state funds spent on a registry could be better used on funding true prevention efforts, such as accessible animal welfare classes.

Individuals convicted of felony animal cruelty can face prison time and fines of thousands of dollars. Decades of research shows that the likelihood of engaging in animal cruelty increases when one is exposed to other trauma, particularly for children.<sup>2</sup> Animal abuse is prevalent in families with substantiated child physical abuse.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, requiring 10 years of animal abuse registration, on top of fines and incarceration, for individuals who were likely exposed to severe abuse as children perpetuates cycles of harm and will not enhance public safety.

Registration following existing penalties will destabilize individuals and result in recidivism, particularly because the people on the list will face barriers to stable housing and employment. Evidence from the sex offender registry shows that being listed on such registries causes significant barriers to securing housing and employment; [a significant percentage of those listed on California's sex offender registry are homeless](#). This often leads to an increased likelihood of drug addiction and a decrease in mental health, increasing the likelihood of recidivism.

Lastly, registry would duplicate existing databases and available background search tools where a felony conviction would already show up. For these reasons, please vote NO on AB 2344 (Haney).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie Kim".

Melanie Kim (she/her)  
State Policy Director  
San Francisco Public Defender  
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