



Assemblymember Rudy Salas, 32nd District
ASSEMBLY BILL 1951 – ANIMAL CRUELTY
FACT SHEET

ISSUE

The National Link Coalition is an organization dedicated to promoting the understanding of the connection between animal abuse and violent crimes. Their research shows 70 percent of animal abusers had criminal records including crimes of violence, property, drugs, or disorderly behavior. 61.5 percent of animal abuse offenders had also committed an assault, 17 percent had committed sexual abuse, and 8 percent had arson convictions.

Several studies show that there is a direct link between acts of animal cruelty and violence toward others, including child abuse, spousal abuse, elder abuse, and other violent behavior. Research has also established that animal abuse is a better predictor of sexual assault than previous convictions for firearms offenses or homicide.

The correlation between animal abuse and violent crimes is so strong that the FBI will start collecting data on animal cruelty crimes via its National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). In doing so, the bureau has classified animal cruelty as a “Group A” felony, on par with arson, assault, and homicide.

Despite actions taken by the FBI and the established link between animal abuse and other violence, acts of animal cruelty are not classified as violent crimes in California and the state does not take the link into consideration when sentencing or rehabilitating animal abusers.

EXISTING LAW

Existing law prohibits specified acts of animal cruelty including the malicious and intentional maiming, mutilation, torture, or wounding of a living animal. A violation of these provisions is punishable as a felony by imprisonment in a county jail for 16 months, 2 years, or 3 years, or by a fine of up to \$20,000, or by both a fine and imprisonment.

THIS BILL

AB 1951 requires a court upon conviction of a person for committing animal abuse to order a psychiatric examination, and requires psychiatric counseling as a condition of probation for these offenses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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