

**OPPOSITION TO REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES OF KING COUNTY
MANDATORY RABIES VACCINATION REPORTING PROPOSAL**

King County Council Meeting 7/22/2014

My name is Dr. Michael Bellinghausen. I am here on behalf of the Washington State Veterinary Medical Association, the Puget Sound Veterinary Medical Association and my small business-Kenmore Veterinary Hospital.

We are opposed to RASKC Mandatory Rabies Vaccination Reporting Program. This proposal makes Veterinarians very uncomfortable. It breaches the client/patient relationship by giving personal information to a government agency to be used to monitor pet owners to see if they are licensing their pets. This will have the opposite effect it is intended to achieve. Clients will not get their pets vaccinated for Rabies if they know their personal information is going to be turned over to King County. This is a **counterproductive** move.

The cost of a Pet License is **too high**. If you look at the Cost of Pet Licenses in other major cities, you will find King County is the highest. The following cities are **3-year** costs for pet licenses:

King County	\$90(\$30/yr.)
Seattle	\$55/dog \$24/cat
Portland	\$50/dog \$24/cat
Salt Lake City	\$40/dog (\$20 with mchip)/\$30/cat (\$15 with mchip)
San Francisco	\$42/dog \$12/cat-lifetime fee
New York City	\$24/dogs \$0/cat
Houston	\$60/dog
Washington DC	\$45/dog \$0/cat

As a private practitioner, clients who are coming in with new pets are coming in with limited resources in this down economy. They have to make choices. They are faced with getting their pets examined, vaccinated, spay/neutered, micro-chipped, and licensed.

If you truly want to increase the revenue from pet licensing:

1. Consider lowering the fee to \$10-15/year to increase the compliance.
- 1 Consider increasing the penalties for non-compliance
- 2 RASKC might consider a public relations campaign to show the benefits of pet licensing.

With these things in place, more pet owners would be inclined to buy pet licenses. Veterinarians have the well being of the pet foremost in mind. We want to make sure each pet is healthy, vaccinated, spay/neutered. and have some form of

identification-Microchip. We are willing to work with RASKC but not at the expense of the client/patient relationship.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Michael Bellinghausen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

Dr. Michael Bellinghausen
WSVMA/PSVMA
Owner Kenmore Veterinary Hospital