

(Without Reference to File)

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2344 (Haney)

As Amended August 21, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Original Committee of Reference: Assembly Public Safety

Updates animal seizure and forfeiture statute to state that properly seized animals, as specified, includes animals seized pursuant to any other provision of California law.

Senate Amendments

Current Committee Recommendation: Concur in Senate Amendments

Delete the previous version of the bill and update existing law to state where an animal is properly seized, as defined, including an animal seized *pursuant to any other provision of California law*, the owner or keeper shall be personally liable to the seizing agency for the cost of the seizure and care of the animal. Further, if the charges for the seizure or impoundment and any other charges permitted under this section are not paid within 14 days of the seizure, or if the owner, within 14 days of notice of availability of the animal to be returned, fails to pay charges permitted and take possession of the animal, the animal shall be deemed to have been abandoned and may be humanely euthanized or otherwise properly disposed of by the seizing agency.

COMMENTS

Effect of the Bill: Existing law, largely codified in Penal Code section 597.1, establishes procedures for forfeiture and the costs of care for seized animals in criminal cases. This area of the law created a defined procedure for cases where an owner does not pay costs of care for a seized animal or fails to retake ownership of a seized animal. Existing law, however, does not explicitly apply to animals seized outside the confines of the statute, like cases where warrantless seizures are employed. The amendments to AB 2344 clarify that existing law would apply to animals properly seized pursuant to any provision of California law, not just those defined in statute. Amendments to this bill also gut the remainder of the bill, which would have established a procedure for cases where a defendant fails to appear. Those types of cases are no longer covered by the amended bill.

According to the Author

According to the author, “Animals rescued from abuse should not be stuck in cages for months or even years just because a court case is dragging on. But that is exactly what can happen today. While cases remain open, rescued animals can be left in shelters or animal control facilities far longer than necessary, taking up limited space and resources that other animals also need. The longer they wait, the greater the risk of stress, illness, declining health, and lasting behavioral trauma.

“AB 2344 offers a simple fix. California already has a process that allows rescued animals to be permanently removed from an abusive owner before the underlying criminal case is resolved. This bill expands that process so it can be used in more animal abuse and neglect cases.

“That means rescued animals can move out of overcrowded shelters and into safe, stable homes sooner. AB 2344 protects animal welfare, eases pressure on shelters, and helps ensure animals rescued from abuse get the care and second chance they deserve.”

Arguments in Support

According to the *San Diego Humane Society*, “Current law establishes important procedures under Penal Code section 597.1 for determining responsibility for the cost of caring for seized animals and, when an owner does not pay those costs or reclaim an animal within the prescribed period, allowing the animal to be considered abandoned and made available for appropriate disposition. However, the statute does not clearly apply those provisions to every animal lawfully seized under California law.

“As amended, AB 2344 provides a focused and practical solution. The bill clarifies that the existing cost-of-care and abandonment provisions in Penal Code section 597.1 apply to animals properly seized pursuant to any provision of California law—not only to animals seized directly under section 597.1 or pursuant to a search warrant. Animals require the same care after a lawful seizure regardless of the particular legal authority under which that seizure occurred, and the agencies responsible for their care need a clear and consistent process for resolving their status.

“We especially appreciate your willingness to substantially revise the bill in response to stakeholder concerns. Earlier versions would have created a separate forfeiture process tied to a defendant’s failure to appear, imposing additional responsibilities on animal care agencies, prosecutors, and courts while potentially prolonging uncertainty for the animals

involved. The August 21 amendments eliminate that duplicative structure and instead address the underlying statutory gap through an established framework that agencies, courts, and animal owners already understand.

“This narrower approach will help prevent animals from remaining unnecessarily in shelters for the duration of lengthy criminal proceedings, reduce avoidable costs and capacity burdens on public and nonprofit animal care agencies, and allow animals whose ownership has been lawfully resolved to move more quickly toward appropriate placement.”

Arguments in Opposition

No longer applicable.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, “Minor to moderate workload costs to district attorneys to file forfeiture petitions and serve process on defendants. Costs will depend on whether the duties imposed by this bill constitute a reimbursable state mandate, as determined by the Commission on State Mandates. (General Fund)

“Minor to moderate cost pressures on the courts to adjudicate new cases. An eight-hour court day costs approximately \$10,500 based on the hourly rate of court personnel including at minimum the judge, clerk, bailiff, court reporter, jury administrator, administrative staff, and jury per-diems. While the courts are not funded on a workload basis, an increase in workload could result in delayed court services and would put pressure on the General Fund to fund additional staff and resources. The FY 2026-27 Budget appropriated \$70 million General Fund for this purpose (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund).

“Unknown, potentially significant cost savings to the courts as a result of a more efficient animal disposition process and likely significant savings to animal control agencies from reduced sheltering costs. Whether animal control agency savings may partially or fully offset district attorney mandate claims would be determined by the Commission on State Mandates. (General Fund)”

VOTES

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

SENATE FLOOR: 40-0-0

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 8-0-1

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sharp-Collins

UPDATED

VERSION: August 21, 2026

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