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City's Official Website at  
<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/>

# Correspondence

## Law and Legislation Committee Meeting of October 5, 2010

- a. **Correspondence**
  - 1. Avian Health Services re: Chickens
  
- b. **eComment**
  - 1. Attached



## Avian Health Services

[REDACTED]  
Placerville, CA 95667  
[REDACTED]

RECEIVED  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
CITY OF SACRAMENTO

2010 SEP 30 P 2:03

September 25, 2010

Dear Law and Legislation Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of Sacramento residents who desire the liberty to own chickens within the city. I am a veterinarian who has specialized in birds, including backyard chickens, since 1988. I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Avian Sciences at UC Davis, and completed an avian medicine internship and an avian medicine residency after veterinary school.

Backyard chickens provide a variety of benefits to their owners. They make easy to care for, entertaining pets. They provide eggs and potentially meat, although most backyard chicken owners do not raise birds for meat. Chickens eat detrimental bugs and insects in the yard. They can convert scraps their owners don't choose to eat into usable food (eggs). Their droppings make excellent fertilizer. When chickens are properly cared for and housed they have no objectionable odor.

We hear on the news about egg recalls and laying hen flocks destroyed due to Salmonella infections. In 22 years of avian practice I have only had one case of salmonella in a backyard flock of chickens. For more data, the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory would be a good resource to provide the incidence of salmonella infections found in backyard chickens. As legislation is passed forcing commercial laying hens out of cages and onto litter, salmonella infections are going to be increasing with greater human health risks. Backyard chicken owners can safely grow their own eggs and avoid this problem. And beyond salmonellosis, I can also say I have never had a client develop any zoonotic disease from exposure to a chicken.

People worry about Bird Flu coming to the US and causing the kinds of problems seen in asian countries. First of all, surveillance for Bird Flu in birds migrating through US flyways continues to show no infection. In all previous outbreaks of pathogenic Bird Flu in history, none has ever been encountered along our flyways. Secondly, if Bird Flu did enter our country, our backyard chickens are handled differently than those in asian countries. As I mentioned before, it is rare for backyard chicken owners here to slaughter their own birds. In places like Vietnam, if a bird becomes ill or dies, that is the bird chosen to eat so that it won't go to waste. Here in the US, even if someone decided to eat their own chickens, we avoid eating birds that appear ill. Bird Flu is not contracted by eating eggs.

When you compare chickens to other animals commonly kept within the city, you begin to appreciate them more and more. Chickens do not get rabies. They don't bite nor scratch. They don't keep you up at night barking or yowling. They don't reproduce excessively and fill animal shelters with unwanted offspring. If you look at what chickens cost the city versus dogs and

cats, or if you look at how the courts are burdened with chicken lawsuits versus dog or cat lawsuits, you start to see that allowing people to own chickens just makes sense. And when is the last time a dog or cat gave you something you could eat? I've always hoped that legislation protects our freedom and liberty while prohibiting others from harming us. Chicken-keeping doesn't hurt anyone, including the city itself.

Sincerely,

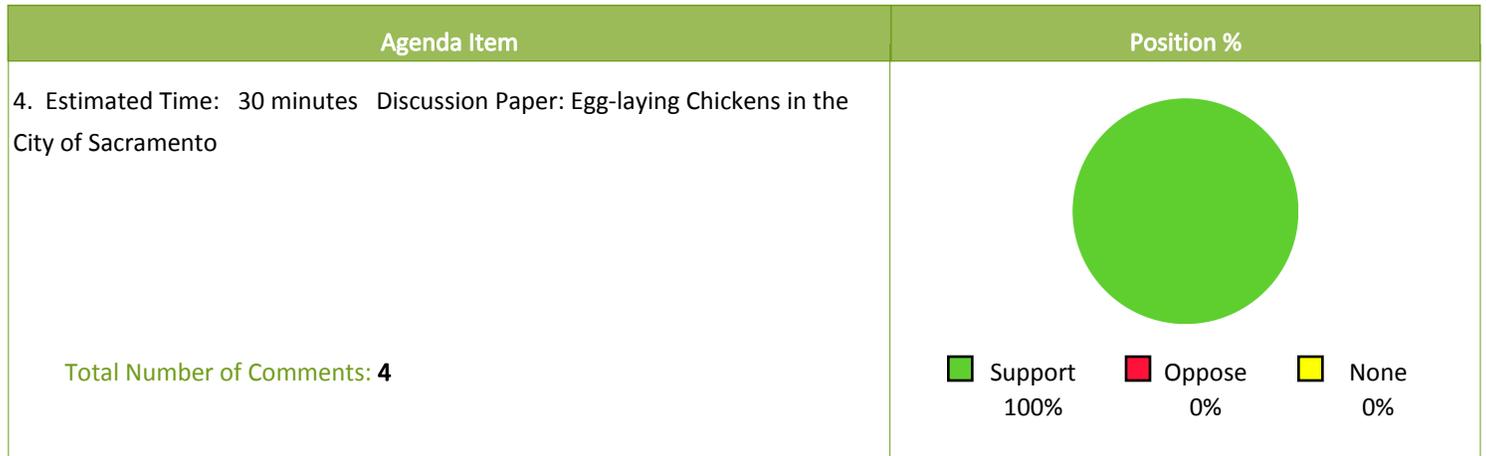
*Jeanne Smith, DVM*

Jeanne Smith, DVM

# Law & Legislation Committee

Tuesday, October 05, 2010

## Top Discussion Item



## Public Comments Summary

Opinion	Agenda Item	Support	Oppose	None	Total
	2. Law and Legislation Log	1	0	0	1
	4. Estimated Time: 30 minutes Discussion Paper: Egg-laying Chickens in the City of Sacramento	4	0	0	4
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<b>Total</b>					<b>6</b>

## Public Comments Details

Agenda Item	Support	Oppose	None	Total
2. Law and Legislation Log	1	0	0	1
Andrea Kincaid <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span>	Regarding the legalization of backyard hens: What better way to be sure of the safety and freshness of your food than to grow it yourself?			<b>Support</b> 10/4/2010

<p>██████████ District 5 Sacramento ca</p>	<p>Please allow Sacramento residents to keep hens in their yards to provide fresh eggs for their families. Not only are fresh eggs are an excellent and cheap source of protein and omega fatty acids, but chickens in the yard help with veggie growing too - they eat snails and insect pests, and their manure provides an excellent source of fertilizer.</p>	
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Agenda Item		Support	Oppose	None	Total
4. Estimated Time: 30 minutes Discussion Paper: Egg-laying Chickens in the City of Sacramento		4	0	0	4
<p>Joe Calavita ██████████ sacramento ca</p>	<p>Please allow this debate to go forward for consideration by the full City Council. Other US cities that allow backyard hens include San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Diego, Davis, Berkeley, Portland, Seattle, Denver, Chicago, NYC and many, many others. If okay in these fine cities, why ban it in Sacramento? The alternative is getting eggs from some anonymous egg factory. Hens are also clean, quiet and loving. This just makes sense. Thank you!</p>				<p><b>Support</b> 10/5/2010</p> 
<p>Muriel Strand ██████████ ██████████ District 5 Sacramento CA</p>	<p>The committee should request that staff develop a draft ordinance for council consideration.</p> <p>Chickens' ability to turn mosquitoes and ticks into eggs seems like a win-win. But dandelions are extremely nutritious and not weeds; it's actually lawns that are highly unsustainable and typically harmful as typically.</p> <p>If the city really cared about nuisance noise, they'd do something about leafblowers and viciously loud motorcycles.</p> <p>Complete comments are at: <a href="http://www.sustainablesacramento.blogspot.com/">www.sustainablesacramento.blogspot.com/</a></p>				<p><b>Support</b> 10/5/2010</p> 
<p>Christopher Stephenson ██████████ ██████████. Citywide Sacramento CA</p>	<p>I am in support of the City of Sacramento drafting a proposal on egg-laying chickens being allowed in the city limits.</p> <p>Multiple large and small cities in the US have ordinances which allows individuals to keep hens. There are multiple benefits, including financial and dietary, for the owners. This can be done in a safe and reasonable manner that will maintain our high quality of life in the City.</p>				<p><b>Support</b> 10/4/2010</p> 
<p>Elizabeth Leavengood ██████████ ██████████ District 4 Sacramento CA</p>	<p>Please support backyard chickens in Sacramento. City residents have waited patiently for the council to pass this important law. Citizens should be allowed to grow their own food and the raising of chickens is not only a cost-effective food source, but it also is healthier and makes good environmental sense, as well. I ask that the legalization of backyard chickens be delayed no further. And, as the discussion paper confirms there's no fiscal or environmental impact on the City to pass this law.</p>				<p><b>Support</b> 10/2/2010</p> 

Agenda Item		Support	Oppose	None	Total
4. Estimated Time: 30 minutes Discussion Paper: Egg-laying Chickens in the City of Sacramento		1	0	0	1

Kalie Sanjiyan [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Citywide Sacramento CA	I think people in Sacramento City should be able to have no more the 6 laying hens and no roosters. I have laying hens and they are healthy wonderfully producing birds. There have been many egg recalls recently and Sacramento citizans deserve a safe food source. Please legalize them for Sacramento!	<b>Support</b> 10/4/2010 
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