



ANIMAL FACTS 2007

ANIMAL FRIENDLY LICENSE PLATES

The Issue:

A number of states are trying to reduce dog and cat overpopulation through the sale of animal friendly license plates. When drivers purchase an animal friendly license plate for their cars, money is set aside for spay/neuter funds in the state. Low-cost spay/neuter programs are a crucial element of an effective cat and dog overpopulation solution.

These special plates are available in the following states: AZ, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI*, IL, KY, MA, MD, MS, MT*, NC, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA and WA. Several other states have legislative efforts underway. In 1993, New Jersey became the first state to enact this innovative system. Proceeds from the sale of the plate go directly to the State Overpopulation Control Fund. In New York, twenty dollars from each plate sale is placed directly into a fund to prevent unwanted litters of dogs and cats. Decisions as to the distribution of funds are made on a state by state basis.

The Solution:

Vanity license plates are a win/win effort. These special plates educate the public about the importance of spay/neuter programs and testify to how many people care, allowing concerned drivers to help animals. If the state does not have a spay/neuter fund in place, one must be created where proceeds may be directed. In some states, the Department of Motor Vehicles administers the funds generated from the sale of animal friendly plates, whereas in other states the plates are sold from, and directly benefit, specific animal shelters.

What You Can Do:

If your state does not have an animal friendly license plate program, start a petition or write a letter to your state legislators asking for support of a license plate program to benefit spay/neuter programs and shelters. Cite the states that already have animal friendly plates. If your state already has a program in place, set a good example by purchasing a plate and encouraging your friends and neighbors to do the same. In some states with new programs, a minimum number of applications must be received before the plate will be manufactured and made available to the public. Please contact your state Department of Motor Vehicles for information.

Spread the word by posting flyers or sample license plates in appropriate areas like City Hall, gas stations, houses of worship, and at special events like fairs and farmer's markets. You can request flyers from the Prevent A Litter Coalition (www.palc.org) or by calling (703) 818-8009.

Did You Know?

DDAL has sample legislation for an animal friendly license plate state bill. If you would like a copy, visit the "Downloads" area of the DDAL Web site.

*Although Hawaii and Montana do not have state-wide programs, pet friendly license plates are available, with proceeds going to a single sponsoring organization.



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