

California Bill Could Ban Pet Trade and Consumer Shows, PIJAC Warns

California Assembly Bill 1122 might inadvertently ban pet shows and pet expos, according to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council.

By BirdChannel News Division

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The current wording of California Assembly Bill 1122 is unclear about whether it would apply to pet shows, such as bird shows or pet expos, according to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council.

A California bill that would ban the display and sale of live animals in certain public places like swap meets and flea markets, among other places, could “inadvertently encompass” a number of animal shows, consumer shows and pet industry trade shows, according to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC). PIJAC is calling on the public to contact California legislators to voice their concerns about the proposal, which is scheduled for a public hearing on May 6, 2009.

As drafted, Assembly Bill 1122 would make it illegal for any person to “willfully sell, display, or offer for sale or give away as part of a commercial transaction, a live animal on any street, highway, public right-of-way, commercial parking lot, or at any outdoor special sale, swap meet, flea market, parking lot sale, carnival or boardwalk.”

The bill does not define “swap meet” or “flea market.” In a PetAlert, issued May 5, 2009, PIJAC stated that it has received comments from several show sponsors who questioned whether they fall within the non-defined terms.

According to PIJAC, the proposal could be interpreted as a ban on reptile shows, bird shows, fish shows, cat shows and dog shows. The poor definition, according to PIJAC, could also prohibit pet fairs, such as the annual America’s Family Pet Expo held in Orange County, California, pet industry trade shows or other specialty shows that would not fall within the general perception of a “swap meet” or “flea market.”

The California Assembly Appropriations Committee is scheduled to hear the bill on May 6, 2009, at 9 a.m. PIJAC recommends that people who support the ability to host, promote and participate in such shows where animals are displayed and/or sold and/or funds are raised to support the organization’s members should immediately contact members of the committee. PIJAC suggested pointing out the need for an exemption for such activities or a clear definition of a “swap meet” or a “flea market.”