

**FACT SHEET for a State Spay/Neuter Program in Maryland
by Maryland Votes For Animals**

1. There is an urgent need for a state spay/neuter program in MD. Maryland taxpayers currently pay an estimated \$8- 9 million dollars to house, care for, and then kill 45,000 homeless cats, dogs, puppies and kittens in Maryland shelters every year, year after year.
2. That's 5 companion animals destroyed every hour – paid for by Maryland taxpayers.
3. Implementing a well-funded spay/neuter program in Maryland is a better solution and good public policy. It saves lives, it is fiscally responsible, and it provides significant public health and safety benefits.
4. Spay/Neuter programs substantially reduce the homeless pet population. States like New Hampshire, New Jersey and Maine have implemented aggressive programs and seen dramatic reductions in the numbers of cats and dogs entering shelters and euthanized. For example, New Jersey reduced its euthanasia rate by 62% and New Hampshire by over 75%.
5. The Maryland Spay/Neuter program will reduce human-animal conflicts including dog bites, currently a major issue in Maryland. Unsterilized dogs are more likely to bite, and spaying and neutering dogs is recommended to reduce dog bites by the Centers for Disease Control, American Veterinary Medical Association, US Postal Service, and the Insurance Information Institute.
6. The Maryland Spay/Neuter program will address several public health and safety concerns. According to Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, rabies is an ongoing threat to Maryland residents. The spay/neuter program will reduce strays and roaming pets that have a greater potential to contract and spread rabies and other diseases. It will also provide the opportunity to vaccinate additional animals and help reduce the rabies risk to humans, livestock, and other animals.
7. The spay/neuter task force met for nearly 2 years and studied a wide range of funding sources. Funding through a surcharge at the manufacturer level on the existing pet food registration system is the best funding source for Maryland. It provides the substantial and sustainable funding that Maryland needs (US Pet food is a \$20 billion dollar industry with excellent sales projections in future years) and it is directly related to cats and dogs, the source of the pet population problem.
8. The manufacturer registration mechanism is a good model as it can be equitably spread among pet owners so the effect on any one individual is infinitely small (on average about 23 cents per cat per year and 48 cents per dog per year). That's a lot less money than what Maryland pet-owners and non-pet-owners are currently paying to house, care for, and then euthanize homeless pets in Maryland. A state Spay/Neuter program is a better way to reduce the pet population problem in our shelters: it is fiscally responsible, it is humane, and it is good public policy for Maryland. Fewer homeless pets = fewer tax dollars wasted and a lower Maryland euthanasia rate.
9. Other states have seen dramatic reductions in state intake and euthanasia rates, and have also seen savings of \$3 for each dollar spent on their state spay/neuter program. (e.g. NH and NJ).
10. Marylanders want to see their taxpayer dollars used for programs that work. A public attitude survey by the Center for the Study of Local Issues showed the vast majority of Marylanders surveyed support a statewide Spay/Neuter program, and support funding it thru the surcharge on pet food. The support crosses all demographics, including age, income, gender, and political affiliation. This program makes sense - it saves lives and dollars. It is the better way for Maryland.