

New Mexico County May Ban Sale of Cats in Pet Stores

Proposed ordinance includes calls for adequate food and space requirements for kennels.

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New Mexico's Bernalillo County could ban the sale of cats and dogs in pet stores at its Dec. 9 Board of County Commissioners meeting, when the commissioners will consider an animal control ordinance.

Although the proposed ordinance does not currently ban cat and dog sales, the ban could be added as a floor amendment prior to the consideration of the proposed ordinance.

The proposed animal control ordinance sets forth, among other things, adequate food and space requirements for pet shops, groomers, kennels, breeder sites and shelters.

The commissioners first broached a potential ban, which would include a ban on sales of cats and dogs coming from "puppy mills" or "kitten mills," at their November meeting.

The ordinance defines "pet shops" as "any premises, or part thereof, open to the public which engages in the purchase, sale, exchange or hire of animals of any type, except the term shall not apply to premises used exclusively for the sale of livestock." No definition is provided for "puppy or kitten mills."

Animal Control Director Becky Darrow said the county has received many calls and e-mails in response to the recommended ban, both for and against it. She said if the commissioners want to present the amendments again, they can do so at the Dec. 9 meeting when the animal control ordinance is up for adoption.

The meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, in Albuquerque.

For more information, go to the county's website.