

Illinois Passes Pet Protection Bill

Illinois House Bill 9, signed into law this week by Governor Blagojevich, will allow judges to include animals in orders of protection.

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Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich signed Illinois House Bill 9 into law on Monday. The new law will allow judges to include animal in orders of protection to help protect pets caught up in domestic violence disputes.

Representative John Fritchey sponsored the bill, and included language that gives petitioners exclusive custody, care and control of the animals cited in the order of protection. Judges can now order respondents to stay away from the animals, and forbid them to take, transfer, encumber, conceal, harm or otherwise dispose of the animal.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals worked with Illinois legislators to draft the bill. "We are extremely grateful that Governor Blagojevich has signed this crucial bill into law," said Ed Sayres, ASPCA president and CEO. "Victims of domestic violence should never have to fear for their pets' safety when making the decision to leave a violent situation. This bill goes a long way in ensuring that this won't happen."