

Councilman
TONY CARDENAS
6th Council District



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**CARDENAS ESTABLISHES CITY'S FIRST ANIMAL CRUELTY REWARD FUND TO
SOLICIT WITNESSES IN UNSOLVED ANIMAL ABUSE CASES**

Los Angeles- Today, Councilman Tony Cardenas introduced a motion in Council to establish an Animal Cruelty Reward Fund to help solicit witnesses in unsolved animal cruelty cases. Currently, the city only has a process to issue reward money for witnesses who come forward in unsolved crimes against humans. Cardenas' motion establishes a similar process for crimes against animals and also allows donations from community members towards the fund.

Cardenas introduced the motion before joining the Animal Cruelty Task Force at an afternoon press conference asking the public for help in identifying Arnett Counts, a suspected animal abuser who allegedly ran a dog fighting ring in South Los Angeles. Task force officials reported seventeen dogs suffering from multiple wounds and malnutrition found at the home of one of Count's accomplices. Dog fighting paraphernalia was also found.

"By establishing an Animal Cruelty Reward Fund, we are saying as a city, that no animal deserves this kind of cruelty and you will be brought to justice for abusing our animals," said Cardenas. "Much like the value of public assistance in unsolved crimes against humans, witnesses can also help identify animal abusers who many times engage in other criminal activity posing a risk to public safety."

"Animal Cruelty is the top indicator of future violence against people" said Animal Services General Manager Ed Boks. "Simply put - reporting animal abuse stops other forms of violence and improves the humanity of our communities."

Cardenas created the Animal Cruelty Task Force in 2005. In its first full year of operation, the task force investigated 290 requests, presented 54 crime reports to the City Attorney and the District Attorney, served seven search warrants, and made 51 arrests for animal cruelty, including 15 felony arrests.

The new ACTF number to report animal cruelty is 213-847-1417.

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