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**New Jersey Animals Threatened by Bill S-297:
Limits affordable veterinary services for nonprofits in Camden County
*CCAS Urges All NJ Residents to Contact and Oppose***

January 14, 2016, Blackwood, NJ: This week, New Jersey Senator Joe Vitale introduced bill S-297. Under this bill Camden County Animal Shelter Low-Cost Clinic and any nonprofit clinic in New Jersey could not:

- offer affordable veterinary services including vaccines and spay/neuter surgery to clients not on government assistance
- spay/neuter or medically treat feral cats, shelter animals or rescue animals
- continue any treatment of feral cats, shelter or rescue animals after the bill's immediate effective date
- perform essential routine test and vaccine services for any clients not on government assistance
- use any grant funding towards targeted spay/neuter efforts such as TNR; to effectively reduce pet overpopulation

This bill would limit access to pet owners who cannot afford the cost of spay/neuter or other medical treatment at private veterinary practices. It would lead to more animals being surrendered to animal shelters due to the prohibitive cost of medical treatment as well as more unplanned pregnancies and litters of kittens and puppies in our state. Ultimately, this bill would increase the euthanasia of feral cats and shelter/rescue animals throughout our state.

S-297 has been referred to the Senate Commerce Committee. The committee is scheduled to meet on **Monday, January 25th**. It is a very real possibility S-297 will be voted on by the committee on that date.

We urge our animal loving community to contact Senator Vitale's office (732-855-7441) and express strong opposition to S-297. We ask you to contact the state senator from your jurisdiction as well.

Background

For ten years, Camden County Animal Shelter nonprofit organization has provided low-cost veterinary services for thousands of residents' pet companions in Camden County. We have spay/neutered and vaccinated over 50,000 pets, supported hundreds of feral caregivers and colonies with free to low-cost veterinary services, and microchipped thousands of pets in order to prevent them from getting lost. It is our belief that everyone should be offered affordable veterinary services and medical care. Camden County Animal Shelter mission is to provide shelter for thousands stray/unwanted animals, find them loving homes, and provide low-cost spay/neuter services.