



March 9, 2016

Dear Mayor Garcia,

We are concerned about inaccurate statements made by Daniel Brezenoff, of your office, regarding the LBACS live release rate and other publicly-available facts about LBACS.

Long Beach residents have forwarded us e-mails containing several factually incorrect statements about the live release/euthanasia rate at the LBACS animal shelter. We would like you to comment on them, as it is unlikely that you would support the intentional spread of misinformation on a matter of such great importance to many of the people who voted for you in the last election.

We are including snapshots of the e-mails, as well as sources that show Mr. Brezenoff's statements to be inaccurate. If you have written documentation refuting these sources, we ask that you send it to us. Our concerns are with the following:

1. The inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff to a constituent saying that Long Beach has an 80% live release rate (see Figure 1).

Slides from LBACS January 2016 Open House indicate that LBACS has a live release rate of only 64% (see Figure 2). We are, in fact, surprised by that figure because the number of euthanasias and live intakes stated in kennel statistics reports obtained from the City and in LBACS Open House slides yields a 32% euthanasia rate (i.e., a 68% live release rate (see Figure 3)). In any case, LBACS' live release rate is certainly not 80%. It is 68%, notwithstanding the erroneous figure of 64% given in the City's own documents. Thus, Mr. Brezenoff's citing of an 80% live release rate clearly misrepresents the actual release rate.

2. The inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff that SpcaLA does not have the right of first refusal for animals at LBACS (see Figure 4).

The LBACS Operations Manual on page 31 states that "On day 6 at the Shelter, due to our unique partnership with the spcaLA, animals are evaluated by both ACS and the spcaLA to determine if animals are suitable for adoption. ***The spcaLA has the first opportunity at making a selection of animals they desire and deem adoptable.*** Selected animals will be transferred to the SpcaLA where they will continue their plan of rehabilitation, and wait for adoption" (see Figure 5).

We have also received citizen reports that they have been told by LBACS staff that SpcaLA has right of first refusal. We have, further, been apprised of reports on a well-known online review site stating that LBACS staff have told shelter visitors that SpcaLA has right of first refusal for animals at LBACS. If there is documentation to refute that this is actual practice, we would be happy to receive it.

3. The inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff stating that when the number of animals transferred to SpcaLA is added to the number of adoptions LBACS has done, the "differences compared to Sacramento essentially disappear" (see Figure 6).

The LBACS Kennel Statistics Report for 2015 shows that LBACS adopted out 471 dogs, cats, kittens and puppies in 2015. An additional 2054 dogs, cats, kittens and puppies were transferred to SpcaLA (see Figure 7). When those figures are added, the number of animals supposedly “adopted” is 2525, which is far fewer than the 4462 animals adopted out by Sacramento last year (see Figure 8). Clearly, Mr. Brezenoff’s statement is not accurate and in making this statement under your authority, your office is misleading the public.

Please note, however, that transfers to SpcaLA do not constitute adoptions, as SpcaLA is not a no kill facility and there is no evidence that the animals were adopted. So in addition to not being true, this statement is not accurate because it does not compare two like entities – adoptions done by one city facility compared to adoptions done by another city facility.

4. The inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9th e-mail by Daniel Brezenoff that the Austin Animal Center turns away animals (see Figure 9).

Austin Animal Center’s website states “Austin Animal Center runs the largest no-kill animal shelter in the United States, providing shelter to more than 18,000 animals each year and animal protection services to all of Austin and Travis County. ***The Austin Animal Center is an open-intake facility where lost and surrendered animals from all of Travis County in need of shelter are accepted regardless of age, health, species or breed.***” Source: <https://www.austintexas.gov/departments/animal-services> (see Figure 10). We have also confirmed this via telephone conversation with Austin Animal Center. Austin does not turn away animals, and Mr. Brezenoff’s statement that they do is clearly inaccurate.

Indeed, a large number of shelters with high adoption rates are open-admission, including Austin, Sacramento, Petaluma, CA and Kansas City, MO. While some shelters that call themselves no kill limit their admissions, the limited admission practice is not a defining characteristic of No Kill shelters, and to imply that it is misleads the public.

Our main issue with the statements that Mr. Brezenoff has made is that they prevent the public from receiving factual information about the status and treatment of animals at the LBACS shelter. Lifesaving can only be sustainably achieved when city shelters are transparent and actively seek out the assistance of the animal-loving public. Misinforming the public, as these e-mails do, is a betrayal of the public trust and casts serious doubts as to the integrity of your office.

If you have information that grounds Mr. Brezenoff’s statements in fact, we would ask that you send us this information and relevant documentation substantiating it. If such information does not exist, we would ask that you send a letter acknowledging this and further ask that your staff fact check its statements before sending them out to the public. In any case, we would appreciate a timely response from your office regarding these concerns.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Best regards,



Patricia Turner, Ph.D.
Stayin' Alive Long Beach

CC: Mark Taylor
Sharon Weissman
Daniel Brezenoff
Tim Patton

Figure 1

Inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff to a constituent saying that Long Beach has an 80% live release rate. Long Beach has a 68% live release rate.

On Feb 9, 2016, at 11:24 AM, Robert Garcia <Robert.Garcia@longbeach.gov> wrote:

Hi,

I'm not sure where you are getting those numbers for Sacramento. They do not appear to be accurate.

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/General-Services/Animal-Care/About-Us/Shelter-Statistics>

<http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article3531113.html>

The number is about 80% live release, similar to Long Beach.

Austin's rate is about 91%, so a little better than Long Beach - but, again, remember that statistic does not tell us about all the animals they turn away. We don't do that.

And, "no kill" shelters DO KILL. Austin only promises not to euthanize when they have empty cages. So the term is misleading.

Feel free to call if you'd like to discuss

Thanks,

Daniel Brezenoff
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Dr. Robert Garcia, Mayor
City of Long Beach, California

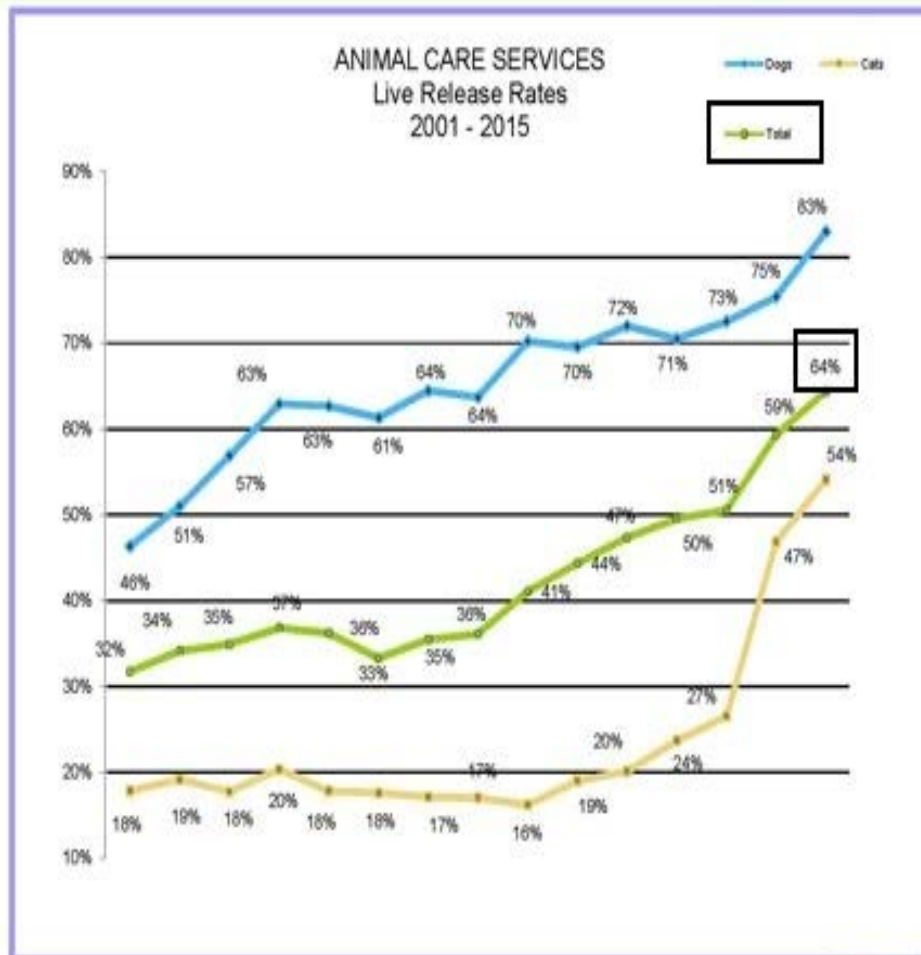
333 West. Ocean Blvd., 14th Floor
Long Beach, California 90802

[\(562\) 570-5027](tel:5625705027)

Figure 2

Slides from LBACS January 2016 Open House indicating that LBACS has a live release rate of only 64%. This appears to be an error on LBACS' part.

Live Release Rate:



25

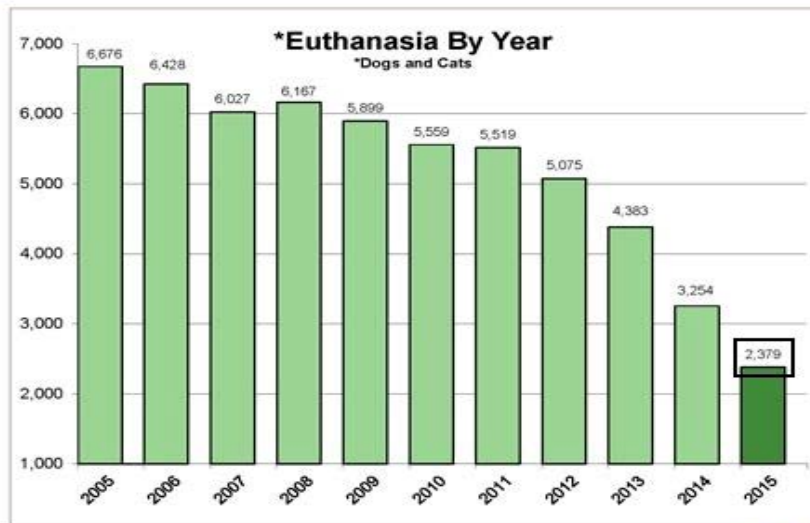
California's safest large city for people and animals



Figure 3

Figures provided on LBACS Open House slides, which, when calculated, yield a 68% live release rate.

Reducing Euthanasia:

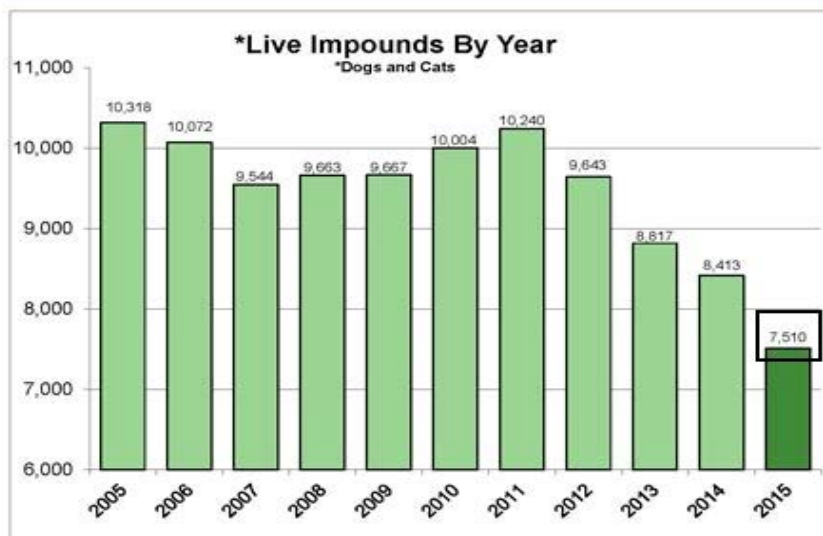


22

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Reducing Impounds:



19

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Figure 4

Inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff saying that SpcaLA does not have the right of first refusal for animals at LBACS. According to the LBACS Operations Manual and citizens' reports, LBACS gives SpcaLA right of first refusal on LBACS animals.

From: Daniel Brezenoff [mailto:Daniel.Brezenoff@longbeach.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 11:26 AM

To: _ (Name/E-mail deleted)

Subject: adoption policies

Sir,

We hold all animals for their mandatory holding period of 6 days. This allows the owner to redeem them. On their evaluation or available day they are available for adoption immediately. They can be adopted out by the spcala from anywhere in the village. Spcala will adopt the animals out from our kennels, but they still have to wait until their hold period is up.

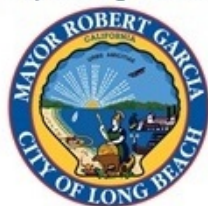
There is no such thing as spcala having firsts dibs. They are adopting them out not keeping them forever.

I hope this is helpful information. I am happy to set up a call with the ACS Director, Ted Stevens, who can get into all the details if you like.

Just let me know.

Thanks,

Daniel Brezenoff
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Dr. Robert Garcia, Mayor
City of Long Beach, California



333 West. Ocean Blvd., 14th Floor
Long Beach, California 90802

Figure 5

LBACS Operations Manual (page 31) stating that SpcaLA has right of first refusal on animals at the LBACS animal shelter.

**ACS's Spay & Neuter
Partners**



Spay & Neuter

California State Law requires animal care or control agencies to hold stray animals that are rescued or impounded for 72 hours. However, per the Long Beach Municipal Code, it is ACS's policy to hold stray impounds for 5 days, making them available for adoption on day 6 and thereafter. Animals held from day 7 on may be subject to euthanasia.

On day 6 at the Shelter, due to our unique partnership with the spcaLA, animals are evaluated by both ACS and the spcaLA to determine if animals are suitable for adoption. The spcaLA has the first opportunity at making a selection of animals they desire and deem adoptable. Selected animals will be transferred to the spcaLA where they will continue their plan of rehabilitation, and wait for adoption. Animals not selected and deemed adoptable by ACS on day 6 will be made available for adoption to registered (501)(c)(3) rescue groups and other interested parties. ACS does not adopt out animals directly to residents or the general public, but will work with registered rescue groups (e.g. Friend of Long Beach) to get animals adopted through their organizations.

Figure 6

Inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9 e-mail from Daniel Brezenoff saying that when the number of animals transferred to SpcaLA is added to the number of adoptions LBACS has done, the “differences compared to Sacramento essentially disappear.” Even when SpcaLA transfers are added to LBACS' adoption numbers, the differences are substantial.

Robert,

There is a movement sweeping the US which is called No Kill, I'm sure you are familiar with it , it's practices hands down save more animals lives than without it. It's indisputable and no amount is political rhetoric will change that.

What are your excuses for not attempting this program in Long Beach? Isn't it worth a chance ?

(Name deleted)

(Name deleted)

That number is highly misleading. That's the number adopted out ***directly*** to a home by ACS. It excludes all the animals that the SPCA adopts out on our behalf. When including those numbers, the differences compared to Sacramento essentially disappear.

We think the comparison between ACS-adopted and SPCA-adopted animals is a distraction. The animals get a loving home instead of being euthanized no matter who is doing the paperwork.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Kindly,

Daniel Brezenoff
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Dr. Robert Garcia, Mayor
Sent from my iPhone

Figure 7

The LBACS Kennel Statistics Report for 2015 showing that LBACS adopted out 471 dogs, cats, kittens and puppies in 2015 and that an additional 2054 dogs, cats, kittens and puppies were transferred to SpcaLA. When those figures are added, the number of animals supposedly adopted is 2525 – substantially fewer than the 4462 animals adopted out by Sacramento Animal Care Services in 2015. Please note that transfers to SpcaLA are not actually adoptions and that this is not an apt comparison.

Kennel Statistics Report
Outcomes from 01/01/15 to 12/31/15

		CAT	DOG	FERRET	KITTEN	OTHER	PUPPY	TOTAL
ADOPTION		0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
		0	4	0	2	0	0	6
	GOOD SAM	3	13	0	2	0	1	19
	MOBILE APP	1	4	0	0	0	1	6
	REFERRAL	4	8	0	4	2	0	18
	REMOTE EVT	3	5	0	12	0	0	20
	REPEAT ADT	2	2	0	1	0	0	5
	SOCIAL MED	5	10	0	1	0	0	16
	SPCALA	24	110	0	65	5	4	208
	WALKIN	31	95	0	18	9	4	157
	WEB	0	26	0	5	2	1	34
	TOTAL	73	277	0	110	18	11	489

489 total adoptions minus 18 "others" = 471 adoptions of dogs, cats, kittens and puppies.

TRANSFER		0	1	0	0	8	0	9
	LA COUNTY	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
	LBAH	1	0	0	0	102	0	103
	OTHER REPT	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	OTHER RESC	1	1	0	1	31	0	34
	OTHER WILD	0	0	0	0	61	0	61
	OTHERVET	1	0	0	0	9	0	10
	SBACC	12	13	0	4	0	1	30
	SEAACA	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
	SPCALA	224	1,031	0	454	31	345	2,085
	TRANSPORT	70	81	0	113	8	1	273
	TOTAL	309	1,136	0	572	251	347	2,615

2085 total transfers to SpcaLA minus 31 "others" = 2054 transfers (these are not adoptions but are transfers to another risky shelter environment).

Figure 8

Sacramento Animal Care Services' adoption numbers for 2015, obtained from their website:
<http://portal.cityofsacramento.org/General-Services/Animal-Care/About-Us/The%20Numbers>

DECEMBER 2015	DOG	CAT	TOTAL	YEAR-TO-DATE
INTAKE	451	217	668	10758
OUTCOME				
ADOPT	201	299	500	4462
RESCUE	27	13	40	637
RETURNED TO OWNER	94	6	100	1166
TRANSFERRED	51	0	51	989
EUTHANIZED	100	30	130	2061
DIED	4	10	14	294
ESCAPE/MISSING	0	2	2	31
FERAL RETURN	0	63	63	982
REMAINED IN CARE	-26	-206	-232	136
SAVE RATE	77%	82%	78%	78%

Figure 9

Inaccurate statement in a Feb. 9th e-mail by Daniel Brezenoff that Austin Animal Center turns away animals. Austin Animal Center is an open-intake shelter and does not turn animals away.

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Figure 10

Austin Animal Center's website indicating that it is an open-intake shelter.

