ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 83

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Respectfully urges state and local governments to guarantee senior citizens right to own pets in private and public multi-family dwellings.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION respectfully urging state and local governments to guarantee senior citizens the right to own pets in private and public multi-family dwellings.

WHEREAS, In New Jersey, the right of senior citizens to own pets in many private and public multi-family dwellings is protected by law; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the benefits of pet ownership by individuals who are elderly, New Jersey enacted the law commonly known as the Pets in Housing Projects Law in 2008; and

WHEREAS, The law provides that any senior citizen residing in a senior citizen housing project shall, upon providing written notice to the landlord, be permitted to own, harbor or care for a domesticated companion animal while a resident of that project; and

WHEREAS, According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, studies have shown that pet ownership can increase fitness, lower stress, and increase overall happiness among pet owners; and

WHEREAS, Pet ownership has been shown to lead to an increased physical exercise routine and decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and the risk for heart disease; and

WHEREAS, Studies have shown that pet ownership is especially beneficial to senior citizens as it can lead to increased opportunities for socialization and reduce the use for anti-depressants; and

WHEREAS, Pet ownership among the elderly has also been shown to improve behaviors and eating habits in individuals with Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, The health benefits of pet ownership among senior citizens can lead to a better physical and mental health, and reduce health care costs for the senior citizen population; and

WHEREAS, Therefore, it is appropriate to encourage other state and local governments to recognize the importance of pet ownership among senior citizens and to provide for similar protections for senior citizens residing in rental housing; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The General Assembly of the State of New Jersey respectfully urges state and local governments to guarantee senior citizens the right to own pets in private or public multi-family dwellings.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Council of State Governments.

STATEMENT

This resolution recognizes the health and wellness benefits of pet ownership by senior citizens and respectfully urges state and local governments to ensure pet ownership rights for senior citizens. New Jersey protects by a law a senior citizen's right to own pets in many private and public multi-family dwellings. Pet ownership has been shown to result in significant health benefits such as decreased blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and a reduced risk for heart disease. Senior citizens who own pets are more social and are less likely to need anti-depressants. Due to the many physical and mental health benefits of pet ownership, other states and local governments should follow New Jersey's example and enact laws to allow senior citizens in rental housing to own pets.