Proposition 2
Treatment of Farm Animals. Statute.

Background

Animal agriculture is a major industry in California. Over 40 million animals are raised for commercial purposes on California farms and ranches. California's leading livestock commodities are milk and other dairy products, cattle, and chickens.

In recent years, there has been a growing public awareness about farm animal production methods, and how these practices affect the treatment of the animals. In particular, concerns have been expressed about some animal farming practices, including the housing of certain animals in confined spaces, such as cages or other restrictive enclosures.

Partly in response to these concerns, various animal farming industries have made changes in their production practices. For example, certain industries have developed guidelines and best practices aimed, in part, at improving the care and handling of farm animals.

State law prohibits cruelty to animals. Under state law, for example, any person who keeps an animal confined in an enclosed area is required to provide it with an adequate exercise area, and permit access to adequate shelter, food, and water. Other laws specifically related to farm animals generally focus on the humane transportation and slaughter of these animals. Depending upon the specific violation, an individual could be found guilty of a misdemeanor or felony punishable by a fine, imprisonment, or both.

Proposal

Beginning January 1, 2015, this measure prohibits with certain exceptions the confinement on a farm of pregnant pigs, calves raised for veal, and egg-laying hens in a manner that does not allow them to turn around freely, lie down, stand up, and fully extend their limbs. Under the measure, any person who violates this law would be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to $1,000 and/or imprisonment in county jail for up to six months.

Fiscal Effects

Compared to current practice most commonly used by California farmers in the affected industries, this measure would require more space and/or alternate methods for housing pregnant pigs, calves raised for veal, and egg-laying hens. As a result, this measure would increase production costs for some of these farmers. To the extent that these higher production costs cause some farmers to exit the business, or otherwise reduce overall production and profitability, there could be reduced state and local tax

revenues. The magnitude of this fiscal effect is unknown, but potentially in the range of several million dollars annually.

Additionally, this measure could result in unknown, but probably minor, local and state costs for enforcement and prosecution of individuals charged with the new animal confinement offense. These costs would be partially offset by revenue from the collection of misdemeanor fines.