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Public Comments

An Open Letter to Orange County Supervisor Janet Nguyen

You Called OC Animal Care a “Disaster.” Now Deliver the Reform You Demanded.

August 10, 2026

Dear Supervisor Nguyen:

On January 1, 2024, while serving as a state senator, you published **a scathing opinion piece in the Orange County Register** describing OC Animal Care as a “disaster” and demanding immediate reform. You criticized a lack of transparency, restricted public access, euthanasia practices and inadequate oversight. Most significantly, you wrote that the Orange County Board of Supervisors was “the only body that could rectify the situation.”

You then ran to return to that very Board. Your campaign website prominently featured the op-ed, and in November 2024, voters elected you First District Supervisor with 61.24% of the vote.

More than two and a half years have passed since you issued that warning. More than a year and a half has passed since you returned to the Board. The public is entitled to ask: Where is the comprehensive reform you said OC Animal Care urgently needed?

In March 2025, you and Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento proposed expanding public viewing hours, establishing a community liaison position, reconsidering TNR services and restoring monthly online shelter statistics. The Board directed staff to move forward.

Access, a liaison and more frequent statistics are not the same as systemic reform.

Questions remain about shelter capacity, managed intake, the treatment of healthy stray cats, lawful and humane true TNR, compliance with the Hayden Act, implementation of the 2018 strategic plan, and affordable spay-and-neuter services.

The County’s 2026 progress report classified the strategic plan’s 85% cat live-release goal as “no longer applicable” because the shelter no longer offers TNR services. The plan’s TNR goal was listed as delayed or pending.

A policy that simply turns away healthy stray cats without sterilization, vaccination, a verified caretaker or a lawful return process is not TNR. In *Pet Assistance Foundation v. San Diego Humane Society*, the San Diego Superior Court ruled that releasing domesticated cats without a known caretaker constituted unlawful animal abandonment under California Penal Code section 597s. Such a policy also shifts the burden onto community residents and rescuers.

In February 2026, Fix Our Shelters, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, issued OC Animal Care a **formal cease-and-desist demand** setting forth specific practices identified as violations of California animal protection laws and demanding their immediate cessation and corrective action.

At a February 2026 Board meeting, you acknowledged that the shelter remained “a work in progress” and said there was still work to be done. That may be true, but it is no longer a sufficient answer.

The issue is not whether you or the other supervisors personally manage kennel employees or make daily operational decisions. You do not. The issue is whether the Board is using the authority it possesses: control over the County budget, policy direction, public oversight and the County executive structure responsible for OC Animal Care.

OC Animal Care operates within OC Community Resources. Day-to-day operations may be handled by administrators, but the system is overseen and funded by the Board. Supervisors cannot take credit for improvements while treating continuing failures as someone else’s responsibility. Official County materials describe the Board as the executive body that oversees County agencies, establishes policy and determines annual budget allocations.

Your recent announcement welcoming Los Alamitos into the “OC Animal Care family” illustrates the concern. Adding another contract city should not be presented primarily as a feel-good milestone or a photograph of the shelter’s campus. It should trigger serious public questions.

Does OC Animal Care have enough animal-care staff and kennel space to absorb another city responsibly? What performance standards are included in the contract? Will Los Alamitos residents receive transparent data about intakes, outcomes, response times and euthanasia? What spay-and-neuter resources will accompany the expansion? How will the County ensure that this additional responsibility does not further strain existing services?

A beautiful campus is not proof of a well-functioning shelter. Government accountability is measured by policies, transparency, legal compliance and outcomes for animals, not by buildings or announcements.

There is also an uncomfortable political reality. Fully acknowledging OC Animal Care’s unresolved problems would require the Board to examine the adequacy of its own oversight. It is easier to describe the shelter as improving or needing “more work” than it is to establish measurable deadlines and accept responsibility when those deadlines are missed.

This is about holding an elected official to the standard she chose.

You set that standard yourself. You called the shelter a disaster, said immediate reform was necessary and identified the Board as the only body capable of fixing it.

Now that you hold a seat on that Board, the question is no longer what you said as a candidate or state senator. The question is what you and your colleagues have delivered.

As an animal advocate who has worked to reform OC Animal Care since 2012, including successfully litigating against the County and helping secure meaningful reforms at the shelter, I recognize that OC Animal Care is not the same institution it was then. Meaningful reforms have been achieved and progress has been made. However, significant concerns remain, and further reform is still necessary.

You and the Board should publish a clear, time-bound reform plan identifying legal compliance measures, managed intake policies, lawful and humane true TNR options, spay-and-neuter capacity, rescue benchmarks under the 2018 strategic plan, and transparent outcome reporting. Each item should identify the department responsible, a deadline and a public measure of progress.

Orange County residents should not have to settle for partial changes or another declaration that reform remains a work in progress. The Board cannot continue to overlook unresolved policies that put both animals and taxpayers at risk.

Two and a half years after you demanded immediate action, you should answer the constituents who relied on your words:

What has been fixed?

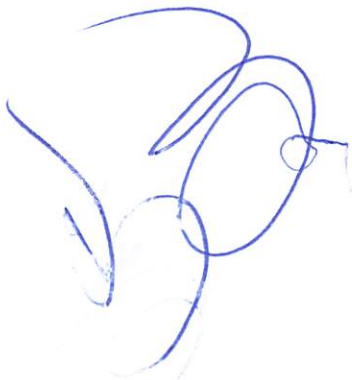
What remains unresolved?

And are animals materially safer because you are now on the Board?

Respectfully,

Sharon Logan

Sharon Logan is the founder of Paw Protectors Rescue and an animal shelter reform advocate who has worked to reform OC Animal Care since 2012, including successfully litigating against Orange County and San Diego Humane Society and helping secure meaningful shelter reforms in both counties.



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