

Please copy and RETYPE. Be sure to REMOVE all () s and insert the needed information. ALWAYS give your name, address and phone number.

(TO:..insert name here)
(address)
(city, state,zip)

(FROM:..Your name)
(Your address)
(your city, state, zip)
(your area code and phone number)

Dear (insert name here):

To be useful, legislation must be effective, enforceable, economical, and reasonably fair. Recently, a bill (CITE BILL NUMBER HERE) has been placed before (RELEVANT BODY i.e., city council, etc.,) that fails all of these tests. This legislation is motivated by fear and lack of relevant knowledge. It is discriminatory, impractical, and unenforceable. Worst of all, it will not solve the problem. I urge you to vote against it.

The proposed bill would restrict the ownership of certain types of dogs, specifically (INSERT breed/s here). These breeds have been the subject of irresponsible and sensationalist reporting across the country. The media and the inexperienced would have you believe that these breeds are vicious and should be prohibited.

The plain fact is that there is no relationship between the type of the dog and the number of incidents. If your town has 100 German Shepherds and 1 Poodle, you'll soon learn that the German Shepherds are responsible for 100 times as many incidents as the Poodles. Does this mean that German Shepherds are intrinsically vicious? Of course not.

Taken as a whole, the (INSERT breed/s here) breeds have proven their stability and good canine citizenry by becoming 'Search & Rescue dogs, Therapy dogs working inside hospitals, professional Herding dogs and family companions for years.

A five year study published in the Cincinnati Law Review in 1982, vol. 53, pg 1077, which specifically considered both Rottweilers and "pit bulls," concluded in part that:

... statistics do not support the assertion that any one breed was dangerous, - when legislation is focused on the type of dog it fails, because it is ... unenforceable, confusing, and costly... focusing legislation on dogs that are "vicious" distracts attention from the real problem, which is irresponsible owners.

In light of the studies, the facts, and the discriminatory nature of the proposed legislation, we urge you to take the following actions:

1. Reject the current legislation, which is contrary to fact and distracts from the real issue: responsible ownership.

2. Work to establish reasonable guidelines for responsible pet ownership, and encourage legislation that supports owner responsibility without reference to specific breeds.

Study after study shows that ANY dog, regardless of breed, will be whatever its owner makes of it... nothing more, nothing less. Owners can and should take responsibility for their pets. We suggest that the appropriate policy is "blame the owner, not the dog." If a dog attacks a person, the law should treat it as though the owner attacked that person.

Voting for this proposal as it stands will harm both the law abiding, responsible dog owners and the victims, but it won't solve anything.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

URL: <http://www.staffordmall.com/bsletter4.htm>
Webmaster Terry G. Stewart
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