

## Hvad siger eksperterne om forbud og hunderacerne.?

Vi har samlet nogle af dem her:

### De stigmatiserede hunde

Veterinærsygeplejerske i klinisk etologi Tanja Falster Nørager har stor erfaring med træning af muskelhunde- og hund indrømmede, at det kræver særligt ansvar og opmærksomhed at have en muskelhund, men at deres adfærd ikke er forskellig fra andre hunde. Problemet er, at de mildt sagt ikke er velsete blandt andre hundeejere. Derfor kan de kun sjældent komme på træningsbanerne - og selv om det er muskelhunden, der bliver angrebet af andre hunde (som åbenbart ofte sker), så er det muskelhunden, der er problemet og får skylden, fordi den er den stærkeste. Faktisk er der masser af hundeslagsmål og hundebid, men sagerne får kun pressens fokus, når der er muskelhunde involveret.

- Men at udnævne muskelhunde til problemhunde holder ikke. Det er en brøkdel af muskelhundene, der skaber problemer, men det går ud over resten

Dyrlæge og særligt sagkyndig på hundeområdet Pernille Hansen refererede en amerikansk undersøgelse, der viste, at der ganske vist er forskel på de forskellige hunderacer med hensyn til adfærd, men at variationerne racerne imellem er så små, at man ikke kan konkludere, at den ene hunderace er mere aggressiv end den anden. En anden negativ følge af et forbud bliver en forværring af den allerede illegale import af hundehvalpe. Det er der i forvejen store dyrevelfærds mæssige problemer i.

### Canine Genetics and Behavior

" To state that a breed of dog is aggressive is scientifically impossible. Statistics do not support such a finding. Dogs have been domesticated for thousands of years and within all breeds there can be dangerous dogs because of owner issues such as training the dog to attack, lack of training and socialization.

There is no such thing as the "Mean Gene" in dogs as well as in people. However mutant genes have been discovered. Alteration of a single DNA base in the gene encoding an enzyme called monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) has been found to render the enzyme nonfunctional. This enzyme normally catalyzes reactions that metabolize the neurotransmitters dopamine, serotonin, and noradrenaline. What this does is cause slight mental impairment which interferes with the ability to cope with certain situations resulting in aggression. There is no proof and there never has been that the American Pit Bull Terrier possesses mutant genes. There is a one in ten thousand chance of a mutant gene appearing in a population

Dr M Malini DVM

**Victoria Stilwell It's so needless.** There are effective alternatives besides passing laws about certain types of dogs in order to avoid more tragic dog attacks on children. It starts with education.

And to all of those calling out for the pitbull breeds to be banned, Breed Specific Legislation (BSL), does not work! Britain, other countries, and several US states have banned pitbulls and/or certain other breeds for decades and yet child deaths from dog attacks are continuing to rise. BSL addresses the wrong end of the leash. We need to be focusing on owners and their ultimate responsibility for the animal in their care. So regardless of how you feel about the politics of the debate, the end results of such legislation speak the loudest – BSL doesn't make the world a safer place. Let's concentrate on the deed and not the breed and give full focus to keeping children safe around all dogs

**Dr.Dorit Feddersen – Petersen** <http://www.uni-kiel.de/zoologie/gorb/dfeddersen.html>

“Ud fra et etologisk synspunkt findes der ikke “kamphunderacer” eller “farlige racer”, da det er naturvidenskabeligt uholdbart at tilskrive en hunderace i sig selv farlighed, altså uden at tage hensyn til samspillet mellem det genetisk betingede handlingsberedskab og den obligatoriske forudgående læring, som er individuel og højst forskelligt.

Ud fra et biologisk synspunkt er virkningerne af miljø og læring altid lagt ovenpå den genetiske indflydelse”. Så selvom kamphunde/ muskelhunde skulle være genetisk forprogrammeret for “patologisk aggression”, så er der en masse samspillende... miljøfaktorer - tidlig isolation og dressur til at angribe, stimulus fattige produktionssteder og forarmet hundehold ( Dorit Feddersen-Petersen,2001) - der har indflydelse på udviklingen af patologisk aggression. Hvis ikke dette var tilfældet, så ville man heller ikke behøve at mishandle hunde brugt til hundekampe med f.eks. at begrave dem levende (og grave dem op igen), putte peber i næsen på dem, fodre dem med kød blandet med krudt og lukke dem ind i et skab (Melinda Roth,2002)

**Hanne Hjelmer Jørgensen Biolog og forfatter**

Farlige hunde er hunde, som har en lav tærskel for udløsning af overdreven aggression/alvorskamp. Ikke alle individer tilhørende hunderacer fremavlet til dyre- og hundekampe har en lav tærskel for udløsning af overdreven aggression/alvorskamp. Og individer tilhørende hunderacer, som ikke er fremavlet til dyre- og hundekampe, kan have en lav tærskel for udløsning af overdreven aggression/alvorskamp. Altså findes der ikke farlige hunderacer. Der findes farlige hunde indenfor alle hunderacer.

**Dr. Randall Lockwood, one of the authors of the CDC's “Breeds of Dogs,”** as well as a member of the AVMA Task Force, submitted an affidavit in 2007 in opposition to the breed ban currently in effect in Denver, Colorado. He stated, in part: “Focusing on a single breed as the ‘source’ of the dog bite problem reflects a 19th century epidemiological mindset that attempts to identify the vector of a public health problem and eliminate that vector. . . The dog bite problem is not a disease problem with a single vector, it is a complex societal issue that must address a wide range of human behaviors in ways that deal with irresponsible behavior that puts people and animals at risk.”

**Dyrlæge og hundesagkyndig Pernille Hansen** - De hunderacer, som vurderes for farlige til at betræde dansk jord, er udvalgt på baggrund af sager i pressen, rygter og fornemmelser.

Sådan lyder det nu fra en af eksperterne i regeringens hundeudvalg. Hun føler sig spændt for en politisk vogn.

– Vi blev pålagt at udvælge hunderacer, der kunne være omfattet af et forbud. Det synes jeg rigtig skidt om, fordi der ikke var objektiv faglig eller statistiske argumenter til grund for udvælgelsen. Det synes jeg slet ikke var behageligt, siger dyrlæge Pernille Hansen fra Den Danske Dyrlægeforening.

De hunderacer på listen, der betegnes som muskelhunde, er udelukkende med, fordi de menes at skabe frygt i befolkningen, påpeger hun.

– Denne frygt er blandt andet skabt af den meget fokuserede, kedelige omtale af netop disse racer i pressen sidste forår og sommer. Der er ikke lave statistiske undersøgelser, der underbygger, at de er farlige, fastslår Pernille Hansen.

**The CDC** has published a statement that the single-vector approach in “Breeds of Dogs” does not “identify specific breeds that are most likely to bite or kill, and thus is not appropriate for policy-making decisions related to the topic.” The AVMA has published and distributed a comparable statement.

**The AVMA Task Force** went further: “An often-asked question is what breed or breeds of dogs are ‘most dangerous’? This inquiry can be prompted by a serious attack by a specific dog, or it may be the result of media-driven portrayals of a specific breed as ‘dangerous.’ singling out 1 or 2 breeds for control ignores the true scope of the problem and will not result in a responsible approach to protecting a community’s citizens.”

**CDC and DR POLLEY DVM** - There is no scientific process available to identify the American Pit Bull Terrier and over 30 breeds that look like the Pit Bull. We find the media only reports what they call Pit Bull attacks labeling dogs that are not even related to the American Pit Bull Terrier. Of the fatal dog attacks in the last 40 years very few dogs labeled as Pit Bulls were actually purebred American Pit Bull Terriers registered with dog registries with pedigrees.

## **Den Engelske Kennel Klub**

Deal With The Deed, Not The Breed'

The Kennel Club’s position continues to be one of ‘deal with the deed, not the breed’, based on the circumstances of individual occurrences and it believes that it is unacceptable to ban all dogs of a specific breed based on the actions of a single animal. The KC believes every dog should be considered on its individual character as to whether it represents a danger to people.

Furthermore, there are various factors that breed specific legislation ignores that contribute to biting incidents and the Kennel Club maintains that irresponsible ownership is the most common. Instead of a law concerning the criminal and/or anti-social behaviour of some owners and the ignorance and misinformation of others, what currently exists is legislation that punishes a dog simply for the way it looks.

The Kennel Club continues to play an active role in lobbying against the injustices of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (the KC runs the Secretariat for the Dangerous Dogs Act Study Group (DDASG)) in conjunction with other organisations such as the Metropolitan Police, various welfare organisations including: Dogs Trust, Blue Cross, Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and Wood Green Animal Shelter and representatives from the veterinary profession. In conjunction with these organisations, the Kennel Club has established objectives for a review of dangerous dog's legislation. Our goal is for these objectives to be introduced as new legislation under a Control of Dogs Act

**Tyrkisk Ekspert** - "Dog experts bite back at Turkey's pit bull ban The government's issuing of orders to round up pit bulls and other "dangerous" breeds was an unfortunate, unscientific decision, experts have said, calling for assessments of individual dogs rather than a total ban Dogs of all breeds rather than just a specific few must take temperament tests, and those categorized as dangerous must be forbidden and taken under supervision," said Tamer Dodurka, a professor at Istanbul University's Veterinary Faculty, daily Milliyet reported Tuesday.

Taking calm dogs that have never caused harm to anyone from their owners just because they are pit bulls is illogical, Dodurka said, adding that the country's animal shelters are already full of dogs and will not accept animals of the four breeds banned by authorities

## **Dyrlægerne siger stop: Problemet med farlige hunde findes hos ejeren**

### **Dansk Dyrlæge Forening**

Alle hunde kan gøres aggressive og farlige i de forkerte hænder, ligesom alle hunde kan blive velfungerende og sociale, hvis ejeren har den rigtige viden og tilgang til hundeopdragelsen.

Det er rendyrket populisme, når politikerne nu står i kø for at forbyde »muskelhunde«, blot fordi pressen har valgt at sætte fokus på, at hunde bider. Det rammer uskyldige hunde og hundeejere. Sådan siger formanden for Den Danske Dyrlægeforening, Arne Skjoldager, som reaktion på den seneste tids debat, affødt af en række alvorlige tilfælde af bidskader fra hunde.- Nogle hunde har flere muskler, men det fortæller intet om adfærd. Desuden er det umuligt at indkredse bestemte hunderacer, fordi der hele tiden udvikles nye. Hvis de mennesker, der har en forkert eller misforstået opdragelse af deres hunde, bliver forment adgang til en bestemt race, så finder de blot en anden hunderace, uddyber Arne Skjoldager

## Norsk Kennel Klub - NKK er sterkt uenig i dansk hundeforbud

Norsk Kennel Klub er sterkt uenig i den danske regjeringens vedtak om å forby 13 hunderaser. - Ingen raser er i utgangspunktet farlige. Hunder som biter er et hundeeierproblem, ikke et raseproblem, hevder NKK.

Norsk Kennel Klub (NKK) er sterkt uenig i den danske regjeringens avgjørelse, og mener de har valgt feil strategi. NKK holder fast ved at ingen raser bør forbys og at hunder som biter ikke er et raseproblem, men et hundeeierproblem. Hvorvidt en hund biter er avhengig av flere forhold:

- Genetikk
- Tidlig sosialisering
- Erfaring og trening
- Fysisk og mental helse
- Atferden til den som blir bitt

Et ansvarlig hundehold er essensielt, og det bør derfor være like mye fokus på hundeeieren som på hunden!

**Pete Wedderburn** - Killing all seized dogs is not the best way to prevent attacks There's a better answer: the new government should follow the example of the Scottish Parliament with legislation that's a better way of dealing with the problem of dangerous dogs. The Control of Dogs (Scotland) Bill has just been passed by the Scottish parliament; it champions the principle of 'deed not breed', providing local authorities with greater powers to impose penalties on irresponsible owners. Owners are punished for badly behaved dogs. Dogs that resemble the stereotypical "dangerous dog breeds" are left in peace, as long as they're well behaved.

**Dr M Malini DVM** - Even if we could agree on a definition of problem aggression and isolate what will surely be the multiple genes associated with it, the most we could do would be to attribute that particular behavior to a particular dog in a particular situation. That is, behavior only has meaning in context. Behaviors may be described as, for example, dominant or subordinate, but the dogs cannot be except in that particular situation.

Podberscek contends that "the media, public, and government response to dog attacks is an overreaction to the generally held ideal that the dogs position in society is as a loyal and faithful companion," a relationship based on what those of us in the bond arena refer to "disneyfication." Because of the ideal arises from myth rather than recognition of normal canine behavior, the dogs relationship to us is highly unstable. Podberscek also points out that, even though rottweilers and GSDs were involved in numerous attacks, both of these breeds were eliminated from Britains Dangerous Dogs Act which only named four breeds: "the type known as Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, and Filo Brasileiro." The fact that the latter two breeds didn't exist in the UK and there was only one Tosa in the country at that time makes it clear that this law was not about protecting the public from dog attacks.



I agree with Poberseczek that the reason these dogs were targeted and the far, far, more numerous rottweiler's and GSD's were not was because the former were associated with drug dealers whereas the latter were associated with the police work and as guardians of estates and places of business. Thus the banned dogs became the symbol of what the media and public hoped to do to the drug dealers lock them up, muzzle them, or put them down.

It seems to me that 10 years later, the parallels between breed bans and ethnic cleansing and the fact that those viewed as minorities in certain areas may still be over-represented among drug dealers and dog fighters suggest that this projected symbolism remains alive and well.

Relative to the medias penchant for seeing a pit bull every time they report a dog attack, it reminds me of a phenomenon in psychiatry known as "semantic contagion." A corollary of this is medicine is "meetingitis." What happens is that, as soon as someone starts writing or talking about a problem, people start to see it everywhere. Years ago everyone was having nervous breakdowns, then they were all schizophrenics. Now everyone's depressed. My dentist is so susceptible to this that I always make sure not to schedule an appointment with him for the week after he returns from a meeting because I knew that, regardless what problem I went in with, Ill come out with the one he heard about that week.

Given the tendency for the human mind to work this way, it wouldn't surprise me if the same thing happens in the media when it comes to pinning breed labels on dogs. Granted some unscrupulous journalists undoubtedly will refer to a biting dog as a pit bull or pit bull type even if the animal is obviously a ShiTzu if it might increase the chance the wire services will pick up the article. However, I think that, aside from whatever breeds a person happens to know from personal experience, most people recognize relatively few purebreds. Rather they lump dogs in often highly nonspecific, arbitrary groups such as "yappy little dogs" or "squashed nosed ones." Hence the person who looked at the Boston terrier and said, "Is that a mini-pit bull?"

### **Dr M Malini DVM**

Members of the National Animal Control Association, the ASPCA, the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, and many other canine welfare groups deal with aggressive dogs on a regular basis. So do these major animal organizations support breed-specific legislation? No. In fact, none of these professional groups do. Read their position statements and find out why not.

American Dog Owners Association (ADOA)

American Humane

American Kennel Club (AKC)

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

American Working Dog Federation (AWDF)

Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT)



Best Friends Animal Society

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC)

International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP)

National Animal Control Association (NACA)

National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA)

National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors (NADOI)

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

HSUS Statement on Dangerous Dogs and Breed-Specific Legislation

The HSUS opposes legislation aimed at eradicating or strictly regulating dogs based solely on their breed for a number of reasons. Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) is a common first approach that many communities take. Thankfully, once research is conducted most community leaders correctly realize that BSL won't solve the problems they face with dangerous dogs...

Read entire text here.

[http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/facts/statement\\_dangerous\\_dogs\\_breed\\_specific\\_legislation.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/facts/statement_dangerous_dogs_breed_specific_legislation.html)

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

(click above for direct link to all position statements)

Position Statement on Breed-Specific Legislation (excerpt—please visit the link for lengthy background materials, references, sample breed-neutral laws, and discussion)

It is, therefore, the ASPCA's position to oppose any state or local law to regulate or ban dogs based on breed. The ASPCA recognizes that dangerous dogs pose a community problem requiring serious attention. However, in light of the absence of scientific data indicating the efficacy of breed-specific laws, and the unfair and inhumane targeting of responsible pet guardians and their dogs that inevitably results when these laws are enacted, the ASPCA instead favors effective enforcement of a combination of breed-neutral laws that hold reckless dog guardians accountable for their dogs' aggressive behavior.



## Position Statement on Breed-Specific Bans

The ASPCA supports reasonable “leash” laws and laws that regulate dogs who have caused unjustifiable injury or who present substantial danger to the public. However, the ASPCA opposes laws that ban specific breeds of dogs or that discriminate against particular breeds. These laws unfairly discriminate against responsible dog guardians based solely on their choice of breed. Such laws also fail to achieve the desired goal of stopping illegal activities such as dog fighting, and breeding and/or training dogs to be aggressive. The ASPCA believes that strict enforcement of laws that ban animal fighting, and breeding and/or training animals to fight, is the proper means to address the problem.

## AVMA Position on Dangerous Animal Legislation

(click above for direct link)

## Dangerous Animal Legislation

(Current as of November 2005)

The AVMA supports dangerous animal legislation by state, county, or municipal governments provided that legislation does not refer to specific breeds or classes of animals. This legislation should be directed at fostering safety and protection of the general public from animals classified as dangerous.

## National Animal Control Association Policy Statement

(click above for direct link)

## Extended Animal Control Concerns – Dangerous/Vicious Animals

### POLICY STATEMENT

Dangerous and/or vicious animals should be labeled as such as a result of their actions or behavior and not because of their breed.

### BASIS FOR POLICY

Any animal may exhibit aggressive behavior regard-less of breed. Accurately identifying a specific animal’s lineage for prosecution purposes may be extremely difficult. Additionally, breed specific legislation may create an undue burden to owners who otherwise have demonstrated proper pet management and responsibility.



## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Agencies should encourage enactment and stringent enforcement of dangerous/vicious dog laws. When applicable, agencies should not hesitate to prosecute owners for murder, manslaughter, or similar violations resulting from their animal's actions, and their owner lack of responsibility. Laws should clearly define "dangerous" or "vicious", and provide for established penalties. Penalties may include fines, imprisonment, and/or the relinquishing of total privileges to pet ownership. If a dangerous/vicious animal is allowed to be kept, laws should specify methods of secure confinement and control. A dangerous/vicious animal when kept outside should be confined in an escape-proof enclosure which is locked and secured on all six sides. Signs should be posted at property entrances and be visible from the nearest sidewalk or street. The licensing record could include a notation which will immediately identify an animal which has been deemed dangerous or vicious.

Reviewed/Revised by the NACA Corporate Office – 09/17/02

American Humane

Dangerous Dog Laws and Breed-Specific Regulations

American Humane believes that no breed of dog automatically poses a high risk of attack, and that it is unjust to punish loving, responsible dog owners merely because of a breed's reputation. American Humane supports efforts to protect members of the community from dangerous animals and encourages communities to hold pet owners responsible for any injury caused by animals in their care. American Humane also encourages dog owners to undergo basic obedience training with their pets and to socialize them with people and other animals from an early age.

By definition, dangerous dogs are dogs that, without provocation, have attacked or behaved in a terrorizing manner. In order to protect the public from these types of animals, communities may legitimately enact "dangerous dog" laws. Such laws may impose reasonable restrictions on dogs proven to be dangerous, such as housing requirements, fencing, leash length restrictions, muzzles, posted warning signs, sterilization, additional licensing, behavior training and liability insurance requirements. Any dog, whether or not previously labeled as dangerous, that has attacked humans or domestic animals may be euthanized when local laws and jurisprudence are followed. The owner should be given a period of time and a process by which to appeal, and should be required to post a bond for the care of the animal during the appeal.

American Humane opposes legislation that seeks to ban a particular breed of dog. Such laws provide a false sense of security as all dogs, when improperly treated or trained, can present a risk to public health. Breed-specific legislation that outlaws specific breeds of dogs can increase the danger to the community by spawning black market interest, indiscriminate and irresponsible breeding practices, and subsequent overpopulation issues.



American Humane is also concerned by reports that a number of insurance companies have adopted policies that deny homeowner coverage to owners of particular breeds of dogs. Insurance companies concerned with the risk of dog-bite-related claims can seek information on the dog's behavioral history, require pets to undergo training, or determine whether a dog is a high insurance risk on a case-by-case basis. American Humane opposes any policy that denies insurance coverage to all owners of certain breeds of dogs.

#### American Kennel Club Position Statement

##### "Dangerous Dog" Control Legislation

The American Kennel Club supports reasonable, enforceable, non-discriminatory laws to govern the ownership of dogs. The AKC believes that dog owners should be responsible for their dogs. We support laws that: establish a fair process by which specific dogs are identified as "dangerous" based on stated, measurable actions; impose appropriate penalties on irresponsible owners; and establish a well-defined method for dealing with dogs proven to be dangerous. We believe that, if necessary, dogs proven to be "dangerous" may need to be humanely destroyed. The American Kennel Club strongly opposes any legislation that determines a dog to be "dangerous" based on specific breeds or phenotypic classes of dogs.

#### National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors

##### Regarding breed-specific legislation

The National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors, Inc. (NADOI) strongly opposes breed specific legislation which targets or discriminates against certain dogs based only on their breed or appearance. Such laws are unfair because they assume that a dog may be dangerous simply because of breed. In fact, it is almost always the behavior of the owners of these dogs which makes them a danger to others.

Since 1965, NADOI has worked to help people train their dogs to be well behaved. Also, NADOI educates dog owners about their responsibility not only to their dogs but to their communities. Ordinances against dangerous dogs, unattended and loose dogs, nuisance barking, and other objectionable dog behaviors should be enacted and aggressively enforced. These laws, unlike breed specific laws, force all dog owners to be responsible for the behavior of their dogs.

Approved by the Board of Directors, June 2004.

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## Association of Pet Dog Trainers

The following statements reflect the opinion of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers

The Association of Pet dog Trainers (APDT) supports the adoption or enforcement of a program for the control of potentially dangerous or vicious dogs that is fair, non-discriminatory and addresses dogs that are shown to be dangerous by their actions.

The APDT opposes any law that deems a dog as dangerous or vicious based on appearance, breed or phenotype. Canine temperaments are widely varied, and behavior cannot be predicted by physical features such as head shape, coat length, muscle to bone ratio, etc. The only predictor of behavior is behavior.

As an organization comprised of dog trainers, behaviorists and other animal professionals, the APDT is fully aware that any dog can bite, any dog can maim, and any dog can kill. A dangerous or vicious dog is a product of a combination of individual genetics, upbringing, socialization, and lack of proper training. The solution to preventing dog bites is education of owners, breeders, and the general public about aggression prevention, not legislation directed at certain breeds.

Singling out and publicly demonizing certain breeds as dangerous is unfair, discriminatory, and does an immense disservice to those breeds and the people who care about them. Even more chilling, breed specific legislation encourages the faulty public perception of other breeds as being inherently safe. This can lead misguided individuals to engage in unsafe conduct with other breeds that can result in injury or death by individual representatives of those breeds mistakenly perceived as safe. Also, designating certain breeds as inherently dangerous implies to the public that behavior is not effectively influenced, positively or negatively, by training. This misconception will likely produce a growing number of dangerous dogs as misinformed, complacent dog owners fail to practice responsible aggression-prevention measures.

Approved 2001

## American Dog Owners Association

### Dangerous Dogs and Breed-Specific Legislation

The ADOA strongly supports breed neutral laws that target irresponsible owners rather than any specific breed of dog. The ADOA opposes breed specific legislation, which targets the breed and not the deed. Irresponsibility of the owner is the primary cause of most dog bites and dogs running at large. Legislation to curb these problems is already in place in the majority of municipalities; however, enforcement is lax. With increased enforcement, existing laws relating to proper restraint and confinement of dogs would dramatically cut down on the majority of dog complaints. As an ADOA Recommended Best Practice, communities are encouraged to enforce the laws already on the books instead of turning to breed specific legislation (BSL).



## Best Friends Animal Society

Best Friends attorneys draft ordinances and laws that truly protect communities from reckless owners and dangerous dogs. We lobby for passage of good legislation and help stop ineffective or discriminatory legislation. Best Friends opposes breed-discriminatory legislation (also called breed-specific legislation, BSL), which arbitrarily targets particular breeds. Breed-discriminatory laws are not only ineffective at improving community safety, they are extremely expensive to enforce and deplete needed resources from animal control.

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

A CDC study on fatal dog bites lists the breeds involved in fatal attacks over 20 years (Breeds of dogs involved in fatal human attacks in the United States between 1979 and 1998). It does not identify specific breeds that are most likely to bite or kill, and thus is not appropriate for policy-making decisions related to the topic. Each year, 4.7 million Americans are bitten by dogs. These bites result in approximately 16 fatalities; about 0.0002 percent of the total number of people bitten. These relatively few fatalities offer the only available information about breeds involved in dog bites. There is currently no accurate way to identify the number of dogs of a particular breed, and consequently no measure to determine which breeds are more likely to bite or kill.

Many practical alternatives to breed-specific policies exist and hold promise for preventing dog bites. For prevention ideas and model policies for control of dangerous dogs, please see the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions: A community approach to dog bite prevention.

## National Animal Interest Alliance

### Position Statement

NAIA supports reasonable laws to protect the public from dangerous dogs and opposes breed-specific legislation in any form. Breed-specific laws target good dogs and responsible animal owners along with the bad.

Unfortunately, sensational media coverage and misleading claims of canine super strength and cunning of some breeds of dogs, especially the bull-and-terrier breeds and crossbreeds, have manipulated public opinion. These factors often lead to limits on breeding and owning certain types of dogs despite the fact that many individual dogs fitting the description are beloved family pets or valuable working partners. Restrictions from outright bans to requirements for confinement, insurance, and spay and neuter often follow incidents in which a breed and its crosses are implicated in aggressive incidents or dog fighting or other criminal activity. Such limits cause the death of many well-behaved pets and rob law-abiding pet owners of their rights to choose a breed or mix and responsibly own or maintain a pet or working dog without government interference.



NAIA supports nuisance ordinances and dangerous dog laws to protect the community against unruly or dangerous dogs and irresponsible dog owners. NAIA supports sentences for violation of dog confinement and nuisance laws that include mandatory attendance at a basic obedience training class. AKC dog obedience clubs have provided such classes for the general public for decades and, together with private trainers, they represent a well-established community resource for courts dealing with dog-related offenses.

International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants

Position Statement on Breed-Specific Legislation:

The International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC) is an organization representing professional animal trainers and animal behavior specialists. The IAABC strongly opposes any legislation specifically designed to target or discriminate against dogs based solely on their breed or appearance. The IAABC does not believe that a dog poses a danger to society solely because of its breed. Dogs can become dangerous as a result of faulty socialization, inappropriate training, poor living conditions and other factors having nothing to do with their breed. The IAABC believes that the objectives behind breed specific legislation can be met more effectively through rigorous enforcement and, where necessary, the strengthening of existing laws. We fully understand and support the need for laws to protect society, human and animal alike; however, our organization feels that any new legislation should be based on specific behaviors or actions and should not discriminate based on breed alone.

American Working Dog Federation

“The American Working Dog Federation is a National organization that exists to preserve the heritage of all working dog breeds. Made up of 10 different breed clubs and over 8000 members, the AWDF acts as a national advocate by providing information to the media, the public in general and other canine organizations. The AWDF implements programs for education of its membership, the canine community and the public at large. The AWDF and all of its member clubs shall oppose any illegal activity involving dogs.

The AWDF and it's members support reasonable, enforceable, non-discriminatory laws that allow responsible dog owners to exist harmoniously within their communities. The AWDF does not support breed specific restrictions and/or restrictions of working dogs or dogs in sport. The AWDF believes that a dangerous dog should be defined by it's actions rather than phenotype. The AWDF strongly opposes breed specific legislation. We believe that dog owners deserve the right to prove themselves worthy by educating themselves and their dogs through proper training and by remaining responsible, no matter what breed they choose to own.

Dog owners across the United States make up for more than 44% of the actual votes tallied. We, as the American Working Dog Federation, support legislators who work with their constituents to find proactive solutions to irresponsible dog owners and dangerous dogs, no matter what breed. Dog owners who elect officials into public office are counting on their legislators to preserve their rights as long as they remain responsible and the American Working Dog Federation stand beside them in unity.



International Association of Canine Professionals  
Position Statement on Breed Specific Legislation

The International Association of Canine Professionals strongly opposes legislation which discriminates against dogs and their owners by labeling certain dogs as “dangerous” or “vicious” based on breed or phenotype. Breed-specific legislation does not protect communities nor create a more responsible dog owner. Instead it negatively affects many law abiding dog owners and dogs within the targeted breeds.

Breed or breed type is only one factor which determines an individual dog’s temperament. Many other factors also influence behavior. In the case of aggressive acts by dogs, factors may include, but are not limited to: genetic predisposition; irresponsible handling; lack of animal management; general care; improper socialization and training; poor housing conditions; physical ailment, and lack of education and supervision.

A common and serious error in the ‘assumption of risk by breed’ is the inability to identify individual dogs by breed, according to an established breed standard or breed type. Purebred dogs which are registered with national clubs may or may not fit the ideal standard for their breed. As dogs are further distanced from the

“ideal” standard by phenotype, especially in mixed breeds, it may become all but impossible for accurate identification.

The vast majority of dogs typically affected by breed-specific legislation are not “dangerous” by any standard. Their physical appearance alone cannot be used as an indicator of an aggressive nature. Breed-specific legislation creates an undue burden on responsible owners of targeted breeds – dogs which are most often not dangerous to their communities.

Enforcing breed-specific laws is extremely difficult. It requires funding which would otherwise be available for the enforcement of more effective laws which target truly dangerous dogs on an individual basis. It is also costly to the court system.

Limiting the risk of dog bites should be the legal responsibility of the dog owner. The IACP believes in the importance of educating owners in the proper selection, care, socialization and training of dogs. We also recognize the importance of teaching the general public, and especially children, in bite prevention skills and techniques.



The IACP supports the creation and enforcement of laws which protect responsible dog owners while at the same time promote the safety of all. We support laws which penalize irresponsible dog owners on an individual basis. Current animal control laws should be enforced. In many communities, laws allow officials to confiscate the individual dog who has proven dangerous. This, along with the education we advocate, will help the public not to simply feel safer, but actually to be safer. A very small minority of dogs pose any significant threat to humans. Dog ownership, on the whole, improves quality of life for countless families. Members of the National Animal Control Association, the ASPCA, the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, and many other canine welfare groups deal with aggressive dogs on a regular basis. So do these major animal organizations support breed-specific legislation? No. In fact, none of these professional groups do. Read their position statements and find out why not. (alphabetic order) American Dog Owners Association (ADOA) American Humane American Kennel Club (AKC) American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) American Working Dog Federation (AWDF) Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Best Friends Animal Society Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC) International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP) National Animal Control Association (NACA) National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) National