

# Breed Bans Do Not Work

## Say NO to Breed Specific Dog Legislation this Fall

This fall you will be asked to consider legislation that would ban the ownership and breeding of 'pit bulls' in Ontario. This legislation will not work because it does not address the root of the problem: the dog owner. We urge you to pass enforceable laws that punish the deed, not the breed.

'Pit bulls' are not inherently vicious dogs. You cannot trust statistics regarding 'pit bull' attacks because these dogs are often misidentified by the media and the facts that are reported are often incomplete or incorrect.

Banning certain breeds of dogs may seem like a quick fix, but it will not protect the public because the irresponsible owners will simply switch to another breed over time. In the meantime, you will severely punish the thousands of responsible dog owners.

The vast majority of experts agree: breed bans are stop-gap measures that do not work.

What can you do? This fall please help to pass effective dog legislation that focuses on the owners and breeders, not individual breeds. We need to make people accountable through heavy fines and/or jail time. We need to make sure that dogs can be controlled before their first bite - people in the community know which dogs are a safety threat but right now nothing can be done to intervene before an attack. We also need to collect detailed information on dog bites and to ensure that all dog bites are reported.

### The experts agree: breed bans do not work

"The whole idea of banning certain breeds is just ridiculous."  
- Dr. Tim Zaharchuk, President, The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association

"Breed bans are a reactionary measure. They should not be used as a quick fix."  
- Emile Therien, The Canadian Safety Council

"Dangerous dogs can exist in every breed and cross-breed. In fact, any dog can be raised to be aggressive."  
- Susan Lavicoire, The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

**Breed-specific bans are a short-term solution.** The problems will continue because bad owners will merely switch to a tougher breed that could prove to be a danger in all but the most experienced and responsible hands.

**Breed bans overlook dangerous dogs from other breeds.** This can create a false sense of security when people are interacting with other breeds.

**Breed-specific bans punish responsible owners and model canine citizens.** Breed bans don't work and they are a very harsh punishment for responsible owners.

### Critical Facts

In late August 2004, just a few days before a 'pit bull' attack made headline news across Ontario, a boy was attacked by a retriever in London and required over 141 stitches to his head and face. This vicious attack - and many others like it - was never reported by the media.

**In 1999 the inquiry into the tragic death of Stouffville resident Courtney Trempe outlined 36 steps that could help reduce dog-related fatalities. To date none have been implemented.**

Education - not breed bans - was identified by the inquests as one of the best ways to reduce serious dog-inflicted injuries.

We are each "five times as likely to be killed by a bolt of lightning - not just struck by one, mind you - killed" than to be killed by a dog or dogs. Considering that less than 20 per cent of lightning strikes are fatal, this makes being struck by lightning 25 times more likely than being the victim of a fatal dog mauling. (taken from Goodpooch.com)

**In 1995 alone**, one thousand two hundred and forty eight (1,248) children were killed in the U.S. by their parent(s) and/or caretaker." In comparison, in a **37 year span** 342 children were killed as the result of a dog(s) attack, approximately 9 children a year. [Source: Center for Disease Control (CDC)]

**Vote against breed specific legislation.**

This fall we are counting on you to pass legislation based on facts, not distorted media reporting.