



THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB
CANINE LEGISLATION DEPARTMENT

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.



AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

1931 N. MEACHAM ROAD, SUITE 100 • SCHAUMBURG, ILLINOIS 60173-4360

PHONE 708-825-8070

FAX 708-825-1329

DANGEROUS ANIMAL LEGISLATION

(Approved by the AVMA Executive Board, 1988)

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 and undesirable.



**New York State
Veterinary Medical Society**

1735 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12205-4738
(518) 464-9669 (800) 876-9867 Fax: (518) 464-9548

Official Position Statement

Adopted May 1, 1995

The New York State Veterinary Medical Society strongly supports and encourages responsible pet ownership and the enforcement of existing animal control ordinances. We believe that this would prevent most, if not all, of the dog attacks that have been reported recently, as many of them were the result of owner negligence or actual encouragement of aggressive behavior. In these instances, penalties should be imposed to assure these owners are held fully accountable. We encourage governmental authorities to provide adequate funding of animal control agencies to support their efforts to guarantee the public's safety and well-being.

As veterinary medical professionals, we believe that no one particular breed of dog should be discriminated against because, given a responsible owner, the vast majority of dogs are a benefit to mankind. In the present furor over "pit bulls," there is no formal definition of the term and, therefore, it is unclear which breed or breeds are being included in a blanket condemnation which we wholeheartedly oppose.



CALIFORNIA
VETERINARY
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

June 20, 1990

The American Kennel Club
51 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10010

To Whom It May Concern:

In 1987, the California Veterinary Medical Association adopted the following position on vicious dog ordinances:

The California Veterinary Medical Association strongly supports and encourages responsible pet ownership and the enforcement of existing animal control ordinances. We believe that this would prevent most, if not all, of the dog attacks that have been reported recently, as many of them were the result of owner negligence or actual encouragement of aggressive behavior. In these instances, severe penalties should be imposed to assure these owners are held fully accountable. We encourage governmental authorities to provide adequate funding of animal control agencies to support their efforts to guarantee the public's safety and well-being.

As veterinary medical professionals, we believe that no one particular breed of dog should be discriminated against because, given a responsible owner, the vast majority of dogs are a benefit to mankind. In the present furor over pit bulls there is no formal definition of the term and, therefore, it is unclear which breed or breeds are being included in a blanket condemnation which we wholeheartedly oppose.

We appreciate your interest in our association's position. Should you require any additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kahl
Executive Director

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WASHINGTON STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

2060-112th N.E., Suite 115 • P.O. Box 962 • Bellevue, WA 98009 • (206) 454-8381

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Sandra J. Berenson

WSVMA POSITION STATEMENT DANGEROUS DOG LEGISLATION

as adopted by the WSVMA Executive Board on June 22, 1990.

During the last decade many counties and municipalities have enacted dog control ordinances with sections pertaining to vicious or dangerous dogs. Although dog bites and attacks have always been a problem, news-media coverage and changes in our society have combined to make the issue politically important. Some jurisdictions have passed breed-specific ordinances which single out individual breeds. Most frequently, pit bull and pit bull crossed are the target breeds; but many breeds have been singled out.

There are many problems associated with ordinances that are breed specific. They can be very arbitrary; an entire breed can be banned because of the actions of a single dog. They are hard to enforce because many breeds are difficult to distinguish, especially when crossed with other breeds. Because a dog is classified as dangerous because of its breed, vicious dogs of other breeds are often allowed relative immunity. Breed specific ordinances fail to address the most important issue—owner responsibility.

It is the position of the WSVMA to support strong animal control legislation. This legislation should address the main issue—the responsibility of the dog owner to be sure that his/her dog is not a hazard to the public. A dog should be defined as dangerous by its actions and not by its parentage. This definition should be applied state-wide with pre-emption of local definitions in order to preserve continuity. Owners should be held criminally as well as civilly liable for the actions of their dogs. Local jurisdictions should have the full support of the legislature and courts in the enforcement of this legislation.



COLORADO VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

OFFICIAL POSITION STATEMENT Colorado Veterinary Medical Association adopted June, 1988

The Colorado Veterinary Medical Association strongly supports and encourages responsible pet ownership and the enforcement of existing animal control ordinances. We believe that this would prevent most, if not all, of the dog attacks that have been reported recently, as many of them were the result of owner negligence or actual encouragement of aggressive behavior. In these instances, severe penalties should be imposed to assure these owners are held fully accountable. We encourage governmental authorities to provide adequate funding of animal control agencies to support their efforts to guarantee the public's safety and well-being.

As veterinary medical professionals, we believe that no one particular breed of dog should be discriminated against because, given a responsible owner, the vast majority of dogs are a benefit to mankind. In the present furor over "pit bulls" there is no formal definition of the term and, therefore, it is unclear which breed or breeds are being included in a blanket condemnation which we wholeheartedly oppose.



NATIONAL ANIMAL CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Johnnie W. Mays
Executive Director
P.O. Box 480851
Kansas City, MO 64148

November 15, 1994

The National Animal Control Association has developed the following policy in regards to dangerous/vicious animals:

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

"Any animal may exhibit aggressive behavior regardless 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."

NACA's policy recommendations for dangerous/vicious animals are available upon request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnnie W. Mays", is written over the typed name.

Johnnie W. Mays
Executive Director
National Animal Control Association

RCFL06 (5/95)