



Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



What's New from AKC Government Relations

For the American Kennel Club's Government Relations department, this summer has had a unique focus on policy issues on the federal level. Topics such as detection dog, dog importation, and animal welfare have all been hot topics for Congress. The American Kennel Club continues to work closely with members of Congress to educate and advocate on behalf of all dogs.

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IN SESSION
AKC's CONGRESSIONAL NEWSLETTER
The American Kennel Club's Newsletter for Members of Congress and their Staff

PERSPECTIVES
*We're more like champion dogs...
We're the dogs' owners.*
Enhanced Requirements for Imports Protects Pet & Public Health

Americans love dogs. As a nation, we own approximately 76 million dogs. For many Americans, dogs are part of the family. Our dogs aren't "just pets"; they are cherished members of our families.

For those who have a source of joy — not of danger — in their dogs, the recent proposal to enhance requirements for imports of dogs into the United States is welcome news. Unscrupulous distributors often take advantage of the fact that there are no federal standards for the health of dogs that are being imported. This proposal would change that.

How did we get here? Historically, rescue groups were not permitted to bring dogs into the country. Other experts who carefully vetted a small number of dogs that came into their countries were not allowed to do so either. Given the relatively small number of animals affected by this proposal, it is reasonable to believe that it would subject the same kind of federal or state regulation to the same kind of political attack that has plagued other proposed health laws required for pet products.

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Enhanced Requirements for Imports Protects Pet & Public Health

Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy
Rescue Dogs and Stopping a Potential Danger

AKC Dog Detection Conference

AKC Pet Disease Relief

2018 Fee of Courage

Photo by Bill Clark
Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy (FL-7) and her staff in the Longworth Building finally recall the familiar saying, "if you want a friend in Washington, get a dog."

Fortunately for Representative Murphy, a 10-month-old Goldendoodle named "Carrie" belonging to one of her staffers, fits the bill. The rambunctious pup, who loves to play with the office's Office Manager, adds a welcome stress in the office, gives continuous, and constantly brightens people's days. As Representative Murphy's canine companion, Carrie's job is to keep things the way she wants them to be kept. According to the Congressman, it always a welcome surprise when Carrie walks into a meeting. "She usually greets with enthusiasm before I even get there," says Murphy. "She's a good dog."

Murphy whose district includes downtown Orlando, Maitland, Winter Park, and the University of Central Florida, has owned dogs all her life. Her first dog, Ruffy, a small chihuahua, was her best friend. She credits Ruffy with helping manage his quality of life with a variety of canine medications throughout his life. "He ate an terrible meal in everything he ate, and he was a year old and my family names him to this day," Rep. Murphy fondly explains.

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In Session

AKC Government Relations is pleased to share the latest issue of our [In Session Congressional newsletter](#), which is sent to members of Congress and staff.

In this issue

Learn more about Representative Stephanie Murphy from Florida's 7th district. Hear all about Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy's canine "Chief Morale Officer," and why a chocolate lab named Kona is the perfect fit for her family.

This issue also highlights the increasing threat of infectious disease and parasites to pet, public and, livestock health which is resulting from a surge in the import of random-source dogs for the U.S. pet

market. AKC is pleased to support language in the Farm Bill to improve oversight and health checks for dogs being imported into the United States. Learn more about what is currently being done to strengthen regulatory efforts.

Be sure to visit AKC's [Legislative Action Center](#) for talking points and materials on key issues that you can share with your lawmakers to promote responsible dog ownership and breeding. If you have any questions on legislative issues in your area, please contact AKC Government Relations at (919) 816-3720 or doglaw@akc.org.

[Read In Session](#)



Issue Analysis

Don't miss AKC GR's latest [Issue Analysis: Rescue Dogs and Stopping a Potential Danger](#). Americans love dogs. As a nation, we own approximately 80 million and acquire another 8 million each year. Anyone who has stared into the beseeching eyes of a pup who wants nothing more than to pass time on a welcoming lap or have her ears gently scratched knows that these are far more than cherished pets. They are family members. Regardless of origin, they should be a source of joy – not of danger.

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Urge U.S. Senate to Advance HR 4577 NOW to Support National Security Defense, Purpose-Bred



Dog Breeding and Standards for US Bomb-Sniffing Dogs

Summary: The U.S. imports 80-90% of its bomb-sniffing dogs from overseas breeders. Increasing demand and a shortage of dogs places U.S. national security in unnecessary jeopardy. HR 4577 creates a path forward to improve standards and capacity for explosives detection dogs and encourages domestic breeding programs. Please contact your Senators now and ask them to urge Senate leadership to advance HR 4577.

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Form Strategic Alliances—Two More Things Your AKC Club Can Do TODAY

Our dogs work together at tasks and at play. Picture a team of Alaskan Malamutes pulling a sledge of firewood, a brace of Pointers intensely indicating game birds, Kuvasz guarding their flock, and even a litter of rowdy puppies playing tug-of-war with a sofa cushion. By combining strength, smarts, and determination, dogs and dog advocates can accomplish more together than they can as individuals.

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The AKC Presents Legislator of the Year Award to Congressman Mike Rogers

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Reichman Presented Bebout Award at Somerset Hills KC Dog Show

[Read more >>](#)



The AKC Honors Representative Dan Lauwers as Legislator of the Year

[Read more >>](#)

Do you know of a federal, state, or local elected official who has taken a stand to protect responsible dog ownership?

Consider nominating a deserving legislator you have worked with for an AKC Legislator of the Year Award. This award is a wonderful way to recognize lawmakers who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to promoting responsible dog ownership, the well-being of dogs, and protecting the rights of dog owners, exhibitors, and responsible breeders.

[Nominate Your Legislator](#)

Legislative Information and Updates

Three states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session, and four states are in special sessions. Full Congress returns from recess on September 4. AKC Government Relations is currently tracking more than 2,000 bills on the federal, state, and local levels. For more information on these bills, and information on how you can get involved, visit the AKC GR Legislative Action Center at www.akcgr.org. Here are

some highlights of pending canine legislation issues across the country:

Visit the [2018 Legislation Tracking page](#) for the most up-to-date information on state and federal legislation. This site, updated each weekday, provides the latest bill text, status, and links to legislative alerts posted by the AKC. Click on the links below to view highlights of issues that are being tracked by AKC Government Relations:

Federal

State

Local

Issues that may affect all dog owners in the U.S.

Issues specific to your state

Issues at the city, county, and metropolitan levels, and in U.S. territories

Please contact AKC GR at (919) 816-3720 or doglaw@akc.org for more information or to let us know what's happening in your local community.



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