



Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



What's New from AKC Government Relations

Last year, AKC GR tracked more than 2,100 bills and regulatory acts with the potential to affect dogs and dog owners. Success in protecting the rights of dog owners and ensuring the well-being of dogs is achieved through the hard work of dedicated owners, breeders, sportsmen, and exhibitors who take action. What was very clear this year in all these battles was that grassroots advocacy works! You can read more about the key issues faced and lessons learned in our [year in review article](#).

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2018 Local Laws Tracked



2018 AKC Government Relations Year in Review

The past year was one of significant legislative victories and challenges for dog owners and breeders, and AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) was proud to partner with advocates across the country who stepped into the trenches to fight on behalf of their dogs and breeding programs.

What was very clear this year in all these battles was that grassroots advocacy works! More and more we are seeing that lawmakers only want to hear from those who will be directly impacted. While this is often amplified in election years when lawmakers want to appeal to voters, much of it is likely the direct result of animal rights groups and social media campaigns that make it easy for anyone to sign a petition or send a form letter from

anywhere.

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New Year, New Dog Laws – Make Sure You are in Compliance

2018 was another busy year for AKC Government Relations, its state federations, and responsible dog owners and breeders advocating for dogs. Over 2,100 bills impacting animals were monitored by AKC Government Relations department. Several new laws impacting dog owners and breeders were enacted over the past year. It is imperative for responsible owners to ensure they are in compliance with all laws.

[See Examples Here](#)



AKC PAC Caricature Fundraiser

At the AKC National Championship in December, the American Kennel Club Political Action Committee (PAC) hosted a fun, new initiative to raise money and awareness of the PAC's efforts to advance dog-friendly public policy. Donors of \$40 or more to the AKC PAC who came by the AKC PAC booth on Saturday or Sunday afternoon got a caricature of themselves and their dog by renowned caricature artist Rafael Diez.

In supporting the AKC PAC, participants are taking an active role helping protect their right to own, exhibit, and breed dogs and ensure that legislators understand that AKC dog club members will hold their legislators responsible for laws impacting dog ownership.

The custom drawings will be published in The AKC

Gazette & PureDogTalk.com. Select drawings will be featured in Dog News. Sittings went so quickly that the event will be extended to Friday for the 2019 AKC National Championship with additional social media opportunities.

[See the Caricatures](#)



Improve Outreach to Lawmakers—Two Things Your AKC Club Can Do TODAY

According to several state legislators: “We don’t hear from you. We hear from the animal rights lobbyists, but we don’t hear from you. We want your input.”

When was the last time you spoke with, emailed, or sent a handwritten note to an elected official? For a few people who are active on legislative issues, the answer is, “Every day!” But for far too many dog owners, breeders, exhibitors, and AKC club members, the answer is, “I’m too busy,” or “I don’t know how.”

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Op-ed: Bomb-detection Dogs Vital to U.S. Security

As a recent column by The Star's Phillip Tutor notes ([“The Pork on Rep. Rogers’ congressional plate,”](#) 11/27), Congressman Mike Rogers has been rightly praised for his support of detection dogs, and his efforts to increase the number of domestically raised dogs for law-enforcement work. As the new Congress is set to convene in January, now is a perfect time to revisit this critical but often-unheralded issue.

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Legislation Can Move Fast—Are You Ready?

Take action TODAY to establish a quick-response communications team

Legislation can move fast, sometimes in a matter of hours or days. Amendments can be added to bills that are already well on their way to enactment. Local governments can sometimes bypass standard legislative procedures by categorizing an ordinance as an “emergency” measure, or on the opposite extreme, as a “noncontroversial” matter. Such amendments and legislation can be speedily enacted with little public oversight.

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AKC Lauds Farm Bill Provisions that Benefit Pet and Public Safety

WASHINGTON -- December 20, 2018: This afternoon at the White House, President Trump signed into law the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, commonly known as the Farm Bill (H.R. 2).

The American Kennel Club would like to express its gratitude to President Trump for signing this bill, which includes important priorities regarding animal importation and domestic violence.

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AKC Honors Four Ohio Lawmakers as Legislators of the Year

AKC Government Relations was pleased to award four Ohio lawmakers for their work on behalf of dog owners and breeders:

[President Pro Tempore Bob Peterson](#)

[State Senator Bob Hackett](#)

[State Senator Bill Coley](#)

[State Representative Brian Hill](#)

Click on each name to read more about their support and efforts during the 2018 legislative session. Jennifer Clark, Director of Legislative Outreach, presented the awards in Columbus at the Ohio Statehouse in December 2018.



AKC Honors Connecticut Representative **Doug Dubitsky** as Legislator of the Year

The American Kennel Club (AKC®), the world's largest purebred dog registry and leading advocate for dogs, is pleased to announce that Connecticut State Representative Doug Dubitsky will be presented with the 2018 AKC Legislator of the Year Award.

During the 2018 legislative session, Representative Dubitsky established a diverse legislative working group to study various dog-related issues and report those recommendations for possible legislative action. As a result of this scrupulous coordination, House Bill 5367 was drafted and met with bipartisan support. Additionally, in 2014, Rep. Dubitsky was instrumental in passing Public Act 14-205, which was charged with

studying the treatment of animals in municipal and regional shelters.

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Legislative Information and Updates

Three states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session, and four states are in special sessions. With elections (mostly) over, Congress has returned to Washington for a “lame-duck” session. AKC Government Relations is currently tracking more than 2,500 bills at 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 [2019 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

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

State

Issues specific to your state

Local

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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