



# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

Recently, we focused on the importance of reaching out to your local lawmakers at the start of the new year to let them know you can be an expert resource for them on dogs and canine policy. But there's another side to that equation that's equally important: Reach out to the community – both the community of fellow dog fanciers, breeders, exhibitors and, club members, as well as the general public – to educate them about canine legislation issues and how they impact dogs and our sport.

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## Supreme Court Formally Incorporates Long-Standing Prohibition Against Excessive Fines

On Wednesday, February 20, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a decision of the Indiana Supreme Court and held that Eighth Amendment safeguards against excessive fines are “fundamental to the American scheme of ordered liberty, with deep roots in our history and tradition” and are therefore “incorporated” at the state level via the Fourteenth Amendment’s Due Process Clause.

This decision in [Timbs v Indiana](#) may be important to dog owners and relevant to cases of civil asset forfeiture related to the seizure of dogs because the value of

animals (or other property) seized in local and state actions can be significantly greater than the maximum penalty allowed for a particular offense and thus construed as an excessive penalty in conflict with the Eighth Amendment.

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## Lawmakers Celebrate Dogs, Responsible Dog Ownership at 10th Annual Meet the Breeds Event

The public, numerous lawmakers, and legislative staff came to New York City on Saturday, February 9, to meet with thousands of dog breeders, owners, and dog lovers at the annual AKC Meet the Breeds event.

This event, held in conjunction with Westminster Kennel Club, gives the public the opportunity to interact with more than 100 different breeds of dogs and to talk one-on-one with dog breeders and exhibitors who are experts in their breed and responsible dog ownership. Many dog lovers come to meet and learn about a variety of breeds of dogs; others benefit from help in determining the right dog for their lifestyle.

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## American Kennel Club Presents Legislator of the Year Award to Congressman Ted Yoho

The American Kennel Club (AKC) is pleased to present U.S. Representative Ted Yoho of Florida's 3rd Congressional District with the "AKC Legislator of the Year" award. Representative Yoho has earned this



accolade for his strong advocacy for the inclusion of responsible pet importation language in the 2018 Farm Bill.

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The American Kennel Club (AKC) is pleased to present U.S. Representative Vicky Hartzler of Missouri's 4th Congressional District with the "AKC Legislator of the Year" award. Representative Hartzler has earned this accolade for her strong advocacy for the inclusion of responsible pet importation language in the 2018 Farm Bill.

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## Delta Cargo Announces Embargo of Pets Travelling in Certain Crate Sizes

The American Kennel Club Government Relations Department (AKC GR) has become aware that starting March 1, 2019, Delta Airlines will be embargo kennels traveling as cargo above the 300 series or custom crates

over 24 inches high. According to the airline, this embargo has been established due to structural and safety concerns with larger-size crates.

[Read the Delta Alert](#)

## Legislative Information and Updates

Forty-seven states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session, and three states are accepting pre-files for upcoming legislative sessions. AKC GR is currently tracking more than 1,800 bills across the United States. 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](http://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](mailto:doglaw@akc.org) for more information or to let us know what's happening in your local community.



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American Kennel Club, 101 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10178  
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