



Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



What's New from AKC Government Relations

You've probably heard the philosophical question, "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" AKC club members may wish to ponder a similar question, "If your club does great things for dogs, do your lawmakers know?"

Positive publicity in the media and in legislative chambers helps underscore that experienced dog owners, breeders, trainers, and exhibitors are the best sources of information about dog care and should be the first to be consulted on dog-related policy.

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USDA Seeking Public Comments on Updated Animal Welfare Act Licensing Requirements

On March 21, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service published a request for public comments on [proposed updates to the federal Animal Welfare Act \(AWA\) licensing requirements](#).

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New in the GR Toolbox: 2018 State Economic Impact of Dog Show Statistics

AKC Government Relations now has information available on the economic impact of dog shows in each state in 2018. This information, downloadable by state, helps demonstrate to legislators a tangible reason to support dog shows, fanciers and breeders.

To view this information, [please click here](#). The documents are also available on [AKC Legislative Action Center](#). While there, be sure to check out the many tools and resources available to help you be effective advocates!

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No Animal Was Harmed: New “Animal Cruelty” Definitions Turn Good Dog Owners into Criminals

Our lives today are busier than ever. Most pet lovers have long days filled with commitments and responsibilities, and downtime with our beloved dogs is how we relax. It’s hard to imagine that this cherished activity could be at risk. But while we’re not paying attention, laws are passing that criminalize the normal, everyday actions of good, caring pet owners.

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Maryland Legislators Celebrate Responsible Dog Ownership, Purebred Dogs at State Capitol

Coming off the heels of a long day of hearings, the Maryland General Assembly and staff were pleased to



welcome the American Kennel Club and the Responsible Dog Owners of Maryland (RDO-MD) for the first annual “Maryland Canines at the Capitol.” The event, attended by some 200 legislators and staff, made the front page of the [Capital Gazette](#).

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Legislative Information and Updates

Forty-three states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session. Five states have already adjourned for the year, and Louisiana is accepting pre-filed bills for its upcoming session. AKC GR is currently tracking more than 2,000 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. 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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