



Taking Command

A Publication of the AKC Government Relations Department

February 2018

What's New from AKC Government Relations

Happy February! The American Kennel Club Government Relations team has been extremely busy this month as many state legislatures are in full swing. Make sure you check out the legislative updates to see what is going on in your [state](#) and [community](#). Legislation moves quickly so it is also helpful to visit akcgr.org for the most updated information.



On February 10th, AKC and the Westminster Kennel Club hosted the Meet & Compete, featuring AKC Meet the Breeds and the 5th Annual Masters Agility Championship at Westminster. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about and interact with nearly 200 breeds of dogs and cats and talk with breeders and other top experts about each breed.

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Lawmakers Celebrate Dogs, Responsible Dog Ownership at Meet the Breeds in NYC

In New York City on Saturday, February 10,

dozens of legislators and legislative staff had the opportunity to meet with thousands of dog breeders, owners, and dog lovers at the annual AKC Meet the Breeds event held in conjunction with the Westminster Kennel Club.

This event, attended by more than 14,000 dog lovers give the general public the opportunity to interact with more than 150 dog breeds and to talk with top dog breeders and exhibitors to learn about the right dog for their family.

More than 120 tri-state lawmakers signed on as Honorary Chairs for this event, and many brought their families and staff to meet the dogs (and cats), interact with constituents, and publicly sign the AKC Pet Promise to declare their public support for responsible pet ownership.



Assemblyman O'Donnell signing the Pet Promise.

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Your Vote & Your Voice Are More Important Than Ever

With 2018 campaigns already underway, it is more important than ever that dog owners join together in support of candidates who will defend our right to responsibly own, exhibit and breed our beloved purebred dogs.

Last year, the AKC team tracked nearly 2,00 legislative proposals that have the potential to severely impact your rights as a responsible dog owner. Issues ranged from breeding restrictions, sale restrictions,

This election day your right to own and breed a dog ...



... could hang in the balance

Mandatory spay/neuter, laws that limit ownership, breed-specific laws and breeder restrictions can impact your right to own and breed dogs. Know your candidates' views on dog ownership and breeding before you vote.

For more information about canine legislation and policy, contact AKC Government Relations at 818-818-3720 or doglaw@akc.org



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limiting veterinary practices, breed bans, mandatory spay and neuter, and more.

Now is the time to tell incumbent and aspiring candidates for office that their positions on dog issues will be a significant factor in determining who will get your vote in the upcoming elections.

[Read More](#)

Nominate Your Legislator

It's that time of year again ... It's time to express your appreciation for 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.



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Legislative Information and Updates

Congress, 45 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session, and one state is in special session. AKC Government Relations is currently tracking more than 2,000 bills on the federal, state, and local levels. A large number of these bills have been carried over from 2017. Additional bills will be introduced as more legislatures come back into session for the new year. For more information on these bills, and information on how you can get involved, visit our 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 – issues that may affect all dog owners in the U.S.

State – issues specific to your state

Local/Other – 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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