



Taking Command

A Publication of the AKC Government Relations Department

March 2018

What's New from AKC Government Relations

March came in like a lion and continues to roar for the American Kennel Club's Government Relations department. The GR department is currently tracking over 1,860 pieces of legislation to ensure that your rights as a dog owner, breeder, and fancier are not infringed upon. As always, if you are aware of a new local policy that affects responsible dog ownership, please let us know by email doglaw@akc.org or calling 919-816-3720.



Did you know campaigning for the mid-term elections is picking up stronger than ever? It is imperative that your club lets your legislator and potential candidates know about all the good things your club and responsible breeding are doing for your community.

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Government Relations Out and About

The AKC Government Relations department had a busy month meeting with clubs,

legislators, associations, and breeders across the country!

Jennifer Clark, Director of Legislative Outreach, travelled to Lebanon, Missouri, to speak at the Missouri Pet Breeders Association conference, attended by hundreds of breeders from Missouri and throughout the Midwest. She spoke on legislative issues impacting breeders, and proactive ways they could get involved and advocate on behalf of their dogs and breeding program.

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GR's Robert Miller at the 2018 AKC National Championships in Reno, NV.

Ohio: A Tale of Two Approaches to Regulate Breeders

Continuing to learn how we can better care for our dogs is one of the hallmarks responsible dog ownership and breeding. As a result of our commitment to ensuring our dogs are well taken care of, the AKC hosts breeder symposiums, employs a breeder inspection program, and supports the AKC Canine Health Foundation, among many other initiatives. Advances continue to be made and studies conducted that help us better understand optimal care for dogs and improve our lives together.

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AKC Dog Shows Benefit Your Local Economy

There is no question that dogs have a positive impact on our lives. Participating or attending a dog show is a great way to learn about the right breed of dog for your family and the joys and responsibilities of dog ownership.

But have you ever considered that there are even more far-reaching benefits of supporting responsible dog owners and local dog events?

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Bill Introduced to Make the Labrador Retriever Ohio's State Dog

Active, friendly, outgoing – the Labrador Retriever, or Lab for short, perfectly encompasses the state of Ohio's slogan – 'The Heart of it All.'

It's no wonder that earlier this month, Ohio State Representative Jeffrey S. Rezabek introduced [House Bill 539](#) to recognize the Lab as the state dog. The versatile Lab is often trained for hunting, searching and rescue, scent detection, as well as being a wonderful family companion. The Lab excels as both a sporting retriever and a working dog, and it's these qualities that Rep. Rezabek believes "[reflect the state's passion for sports and the work ethic that defines its communities.](#)" For these reasons, the Labrador Retriever has been America's most popular breed for over a quarter century.

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Bebout Award Honors Phinizys and New Hampshire D.O.G.S. Federation

Congratulations to Elin and Jay Phinizy and members of the Dog Owners of the Granite State (D.O.G.S) federation, winners of the first quarter 2018 Walter Bebout Memorial Award for Leadership in Canine Legislation.

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Jay Phinizy and Sheila Goffe

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

Currently, 33 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are currently in session, and seven states are in a special legislative session. AKC Government Relations is currently tracking more than 1,860 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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Connect with us



 AKC Headquarters
260 Madison Ave
New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212.696.8200

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