

# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

As the weather improves, the flowers bloom, more COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, and new legislative successes are reported, optimism is in the air. However, there's still plenty of challenges ahead in canine legislation.

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## AKC Government Relations Provides First Quarter Overview, Resources for Clubs and Dog Owners

2021 is already shaping up to be an extraordinarily active year for canine legislation and the AKC Government Relations (GR) team. As an “off-election”, or odd-numbered year, all 50 state legislatures are in session. And, as is commonly the case after an election, new leadership and newly-elected lawmakers are anxious to get to work! This often results in an increase in legislative introductions. Add in the bills from last session that were put on hold after legislatures were shut down early due to the pandemic, and it’s meant an avalanche of dog-related legislation in the first quarter of 2021.

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## AKC GR Celebrates First Quarter Legislative Successes

Throughout the first quarter of 2021, AKC Government Relations has been proud to partner with federations, legislative liaisons, and clubs across the country on behalf of purebred dogs and responsible breeder and owners.

Although most legislatures are still in session, there have already been [many successes this year](#) on bills that the AKC GR team worked on with local constituents. Successes cover a broad range of issues. These include stopping a bill in Wyoming that could have caused someone to permanently lose their animals on suspicion of cruelty – even if they are later found not guilty. In New Hampshire, AKC GR worked with sportsmen groups to defeat a bill that could have had a negative impact on some hunting/training facilities.

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## Colorado: 2022 Ballot Initiative Impacts Breeders, Owners, and Accepted Animal Husbandry

Volunteers may soon be seen throughout Colorado collecting signatures to put a measure on the November 2022 ballot that they will claim will protect animals in the state. The American Kennel Club joins many other animal welfare, livestock and animal husbandry groups in expressing grave concerns and opposition to the proposal. **We urge all dog owners and breeders in the state to NOT sign these petitions should they begin to be circulated.**

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## Five Things You and Your Club Can Do Today to Fight CA AB 702- Regulation of All Breeders

On April 27, the California Assembly Business and Professions Committee will consider Assembly Bill 702 – a bill that would mandate licensing for all breeders as commercial enterprises and create many new vague, unnecessary, and arbitrary regulations that could be difficult for hobby breeders – especially those who live in residential areas – to meet.

AKC is working hard to communicate with the committee members and we know many breeders have already reached out, but we need your help! **We urge AKC Parent clubs, AKC California-based clubs, California breeders, and purebred dog owners to take the following actions TODAY.**

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## AKC GR Introduces New Flyer About Travelling with Emotional Support Animals and Service Dogs

In December 2020, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) announced final revisions regarding air travel with service dogs. [See our previous alert which includes the full file of the final ruling.](#)

Since these new finalized rules became effective in January, major U.S. airlines have changed their policies regarding acceptance of emotional support animals in passenger cabins.

AKC Government Relations is pleased to introduce [a new flyer](#) that provides general, easy-to-understand information about these recent policy changes.

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## Responsible Choice, Consumer Protection Laws Protect Pets Better Than Pet Store Sales Bans

Once again, a bill has been introduced in the Pennsylvania Legislature to prohibit pet stores from selling purpose-bred pets from regulated breeders in lieu of selling only animals from shelters or rescues – all in the name of shutting down bad breeders. There should be no debate about the need to shut down negligent, cruel or irresponsible pet breeders. However, misguided retail pet sales bans like those proposed in [Senate Bill 234](#) will actually limit consumer protections and choice, while doing nothing to actually improve conditions for pets.

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## Working dogs: Domestic shortage of key frontline defense against terrorism

The government's first in-depth examination in 15 years of domestically bred working dogs is warning that the U.S. remains dangerously short of this key frontline defense against terrorism attacks and for critical security duties, such as bomb sniffing and narcotics interdiction.

The federal government, the U.S. Navy's Naval Post Graduate School found, "has faced a chronic shortage of domestically bred working dogs qualified for use by both the Department of Defense and other federal agencies. As adversaries, both peer and near-peer, become more adept in circumventing detection systems, the need for [working dogs](#) has steadily increased to address security vulnerabilities."

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## Legislative Information and Updates

Listed below are some highlights of pending legislation impacting dog ownership and dog owners' rights across the country. 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).

In addition to tracking and responding to legislative proposals, AKC Government Relations addresses dog-related regulatory proposals from the U.S. federal government, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia.

AKC GR's Regulatory Resource Center provides updates on our federal and state regulatory work that may impact dog owners.

Visit the [2021 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

Regulatory

Regulatory issues at the federal, state, and local levels

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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This email was sent to: emily.holmes@akc.org. You are subscribed to an AKC newsletter list.

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