



# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

This issue of *Taking Command* reviews major issues and emerging trends in legislation. In 2019, the Government Relations department tracked more bills than ever before. Success in protecting the rights of dog owners and ensuring the well-being of dogs is achieved through the hard work of dedicated owners, breeders, sportsmen, and exhibitors who take action. There's no substitute for strong constituent engagement. On the whole, we are more successful when we partner to reach out to legislators as constituents -- and as dog experts.

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## Year in Review: AKC GR Reflects on Record 2019 Legislative Year

2019 was a record year for AKC Government Relations, with the team tracking over 2,300 bills on the federal, state and local levels across all 50 states.

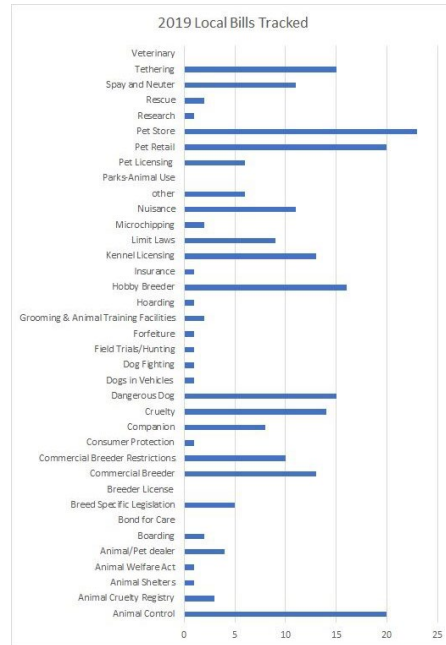
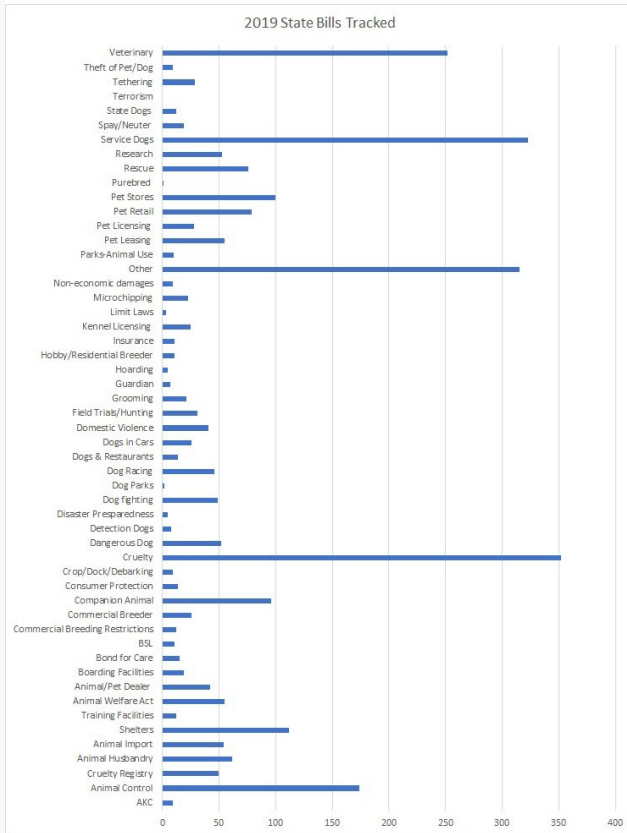
This marks a significant increase, with over 300 more bills than 2018, and the most bills ever tracked by AKC GR in a year.

It was a year that once again demonstrated that the greatest success comes from direct communication and grassroots advocacy. AKC legislative liaisons, federations, club members and local dog owners who took the time to reach out to their elected officials, attend hearings, and make their voices heard made a direct, positive impact on legislation impacting dog owners introduced during the last year.

AKC GR was pleased to partner with you to stand up for purebred dogs, responsible owners and our sport.

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*2019 State & Local Bills Tracked - Click to Expand*



**Rash of Pet Thefts Underscore Dangerous Congressional Proposal**

“Stolen Shih Tzu Rocky Still Missing.” “French Bulldog Stolen From Dallas Pet Store.” “Nearly 20 puppies dognapped from local breeder.” Search “pet theft” on the internet and you will get thousands of hits on stories just like these.

In our daily lives, we take precautions to safeguard our most valuable possessions and protect them from being stolen. We lock our car doors, equip our homes with alarms, and create passwords to shield our personal

information, yet few pet owners realize that protecting our dogs from potential theft is just as important.

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## Indiana Professional Breeders and Hobbyists Take Initiative in Working Together for Dogs

In advocacy, we always talk about the importance of working together to fight for our dogs. As activists continue to attack the rights of responsible dog owners and breeders, the need to come together is becoming ever more apparent. This includes uniting with fellow hobbyists, exhibitors, and clubs, as well as fellow breeders who all have the same goal – the right to breed and raise purebred dogs.

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## Legislative Successes

[Check out the newest successes from the close of many legislative sessions.](#) These and other victories have been won in cooperation with AKC federations, clubs, and responsible dog owners and breeders around the country who continue to work tirelessly to promote positive canine legislation in their state and community. To view all Legislative Alerts posted for your state in 2019, as well as the latest information on all bills being tracked by the AKC Government Relations Department, visit the [2020 Legislation Tracking page](#).



## Policy and Puppies—AKC GR Team Brings Info, Art and Outreach to the ANC

Where can you discuss canine legislative trends while sitting for a portrait and cuddling your puppy? At the AKC National Championship Dog Show, presented by Royal Canin (ANC), of course. Exhibitors and spectators gathered around the AKC Government Relations booth on December 14-15, 2019 at the ANC in Orlando to learn about legislative issues and share information on what's going on in their hometowns.

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## Caricatures for a Good Cause: AKC PAC Hosts Caricature Artist at ANC Fundraiser

At the 2019 AKC National Championship, the AKC Political Action Committee (PAC) hosted a second annual initiative to raise money and awareness of the PAC's efforts to advance dog-friendly public policy. Donors of \$50 or more to the AKC PAC who came by the AKC PAC booth on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday afternoon got a caricature of themselves and their dog by renowned caricature artist Rafael Diez.

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## AKC GR Attends National League of Cities "City Summit" in San Antonio

The AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) team was represented at the 2019 National League of Cities (NLC) Summit, held this year in San Antonio, TX. Throughout the multi-day conference, Phil Guidry, AKC's Director of Policy Analysis, and Nathan Makla, Government Relations Administrator, met with and provided

information to elected officials and staff from communities across the country.

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## 2019 Companion Animal Law Writing Contest Winners Announced

The American Kennel Club® (AKC), the world's largest purebred dog registry and leading advocate for dogs, is pleased to announce the winners of its 2019 Companion Animal Law Writing Contest.

The first prize winner is Monica Pechous from the Chicago-Kent College of Law for her submission, "A Leash Too Tight: A Case for a 'Pet-Integrative' Society." This paper examines the current legal climate for service animal handlers and the consequences of future policy. As this year's first place winner, she will receive a \$2,500 cash prize.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

Congress and 38 states are currently in session. Five states are accepting pre-filed bills for the 2020 legislative session. AKC Government Relations is currently tracking more than 1,900 bills on the federal, state, and local levels. Many of these bills are being carried over from the previous (2019) session. Below are some highlights of pending canine legislation issues 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).

Visit the [2020 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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