



# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

As summer gets underway, we know many of you are eager to get back into the dog sports we miss so badly. However, as the risk of COVID-19 remains, clubs are left wondering about their personal liability in regard to hosting their events. While some events, such as FAST CAT, are easier to accommodate with the new social distancing guidelines, events like conformation can be more challenging. The American Kennel Club Government Relations Department (AKC GR) has been [tracking legislative proposals](#) at the federal and state levels that seek to limit the potential civil legal liability of individuals and businesses, including non-profits, for damages or personal injury that result from actual or alleged exposure to COVID-19. The tracking report, which is updated daily, can be accessed on our [COVID-19 resources page](#).

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## AKC GR Unveils Tracking Reports for COVID-19 Liability Protections

AKC Government Relations (GR) is tracking legislative proposals at federal and state levels that seek to limit the potential civil legal liability of individuals and businesses, including non-profits, for damages or

personal injury that result from actual or alleged exposure to COVID-19. This type of legislation may be of potential interest to some AKC-affiliated clubs concerned about conducting their events while under a higher-than-normal exposure to liability risks.

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## **AKC GR Releases Two New 'Key Issues' Web Resources - Detection Dogs and Pet Imports**

The COVID-19 global pandemic has underscored the importance of assuring that animals imported into the U.S. are healthy and free of contagious disease; and that the U.S. has a reliable source of high-quality, American-bred and -raised working and detection dogs to protect national and public security.

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## **Lawmakers Aim to Hold Off Another Health Threat - Importation of Sick Dogs**

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages, three members of Congress, who are also trained veterinarians, are working hard to head off a potential public health crisis with a proposed law to prevent importation of dogs that have contagious diseases.

If passed, the Healthy Dog Importation Act of 2020 (introduced May 22) will help ensure that all dogs entering the United States are healthy, fully vaccinated with a health certificate from an accredited veterinary authority in the country of origin and that each dog is microchipped so individual health records can be verified

upon arrival here.

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## **AKC Statement on Dutch Kennel Club 'Brachycephalic Decision': Context and a Cautionary Tale**

In recent weeks, there's been discussion, debate, and even some inaccuracies posted online about a recent decision by the Dutch Kennel Club to limit the registration of certain brachycephalic (snub-nosed) dogs based on length of muzzle, while also allowing crossbreeding in those breeds to increase muzzle length.

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## **Did You Know That AKC GR Tracks Regulations Too?**

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

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## **New in the AKC Legislative Action Center: Breed Specific Legislation**

Breed-specific legislation (BSL) has long been a concern



for dog owners across the United States, and it continues to be an issue as lawmakers seek to address the issue of dangerous dogs in their communities.

On May 27, 2020, AKC Legislative Outreach Director Jennifer Clark presented an online webinar that discusses the basics of BSL, key case studies across the country, and how and why BSL proposal continue to be introduced. The webinar also discusses advocacy tips to help clubs and dog owners be effective in communicating with lawmakers on this issue.

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## **Texas Heads-Up: State Breeder Licensing Targeted for Elimination, Expect Opposition**

In 2011, the Texas Legislature passed and then-Governor Perry signed into law the [Dog and Cat Breeders Act](#). The law's aim is to regulate those who (1) possesses 11 or more adult intact female animals and (2) who are engaged in the business of breeding those animals for direct or indirect sale or for exchange in return for consideration and (3) who sell or exchange, or offer to sell or exchange, not fewer than 20 animals in a calendar year. The law was designed to be enforced by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), which created the Licensed Breeders Program to carry out the Act.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

The U.S. House of Representatives and 15 states are currently in session, and three states remain on an extended recess as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. AKC Government Relations continues to monitor approximately 1,900 active bills at the federal, state, and local levels. The COVID-19 outbreak and response has had a dramatic impact on legislatures and policymaking at all levels of government. AKC GR is also tracking approximately 700 regulatory proposals. Below are some highlights of pending legislation and regulations 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).

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:

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 Government Relations (AKC GR) is currently tracking approximately 700 regulatory proposals, the majority of which concern land use/hunting regulations and those governing the practice of veterinary medicine. Click the link below to read highlights from this past month.

AKC GR's Regulatory Resource Center provides updates on our federal and state regulatory work that may impact dog owners. Check it out at [www.cqrcengage.com/akc.org/regcenter](http://www.cqrcengage.com/akc.org/regcenter).

### 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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