



# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

It's safe to say that 2020 has been a year different from any other we have faced. Because of COVID-19, our elected officials will not only be dealing with the usual matters they normally face, but with a slew of other issues – including health and safety, budget concerns, and other matters related to the pandemic.

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## Your 2020 Election Guide

Election Day 2020 is Tuesday, November 3. This year, the U.S. President, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives, 35 of the 100 seats in the Senate, 13 governorships, and countless other state and local elections will be contested.

To preserve the future of purebred dogs, it's important to identify dog-friendly candidates and use your vote to elect those who will protect the rights of responsible dog owners, exhibitors and breeders. Here are four steps that every dog owner should take during the 2020 election cycle.

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## **Working With Public Officials When Planning An Event During COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact virtually every aspect of our lives, and many clubs and exhibitors are seeking to inject some normalcy into everyday lives – including returning to organizing and participating in dog shows/events.

The camaraderie, competition, and celebration of purebred dogs we find in dog shows exemplify the very best of the history and future of our dogs. AKC joins with you in longing for a return to dog shows and events, but we want to make sure that they are conducted in a safe, reasonable manner, with proper protocols and compliance with state and local guidelines.

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## **AKC GR COVID-19 State-By-State Information Updates And Websites**

The Government Relations (GR) Department has been providing advocacy and guidance on a number of issues impacting AKC and dog owners throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes: advocacy to ensure that dog owners continue to be able to access pet supplies and essential services; advocacy to ensure AKC could stay open during the pandemic; liability information related to the holding of events, and advocacy for targeted liability limits related to virus transmission for events in compliance with recognized health and safety guidelines.

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## Understanding The Difference Between Animal Rights And Animal Welfare

In every election, the American Kennel Club (AKC) sees a fair number of candidates who appear to support the human-animal connection, kindness to animals, and proper care of animals based on sound science, but instead use the term "animal rights" and even express outright support for "animal rights".

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## ICYMI - Protecting You & Your Dog: AKC PAC Launches Mask Fundraiser

In today's world, masks have become the newest accessory! The AKC PAC is excited to provide you with the opportunity to show you care about the future of our breeds, protecting the health and wellbeing of our dogs, and all those you encounter at shows and in your daily activities.

[The AKC Political Action Committee \(PAC\)](#) is hosting a virtual fundraiser to raise money and awareness of the PAC's efforts to support lawmakers who value and support the rights of responsible dog owners, breeders and enthusiasts.

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## Prager Awarded Bebout Award At Pennsylvania Federation Of Dog Clubs Annual Meeting

Julian Prager of the Pennsylvania Federation of Dog Clubs was presented with the AKC's Walter Bebout



Memorial Award for Leadership in Canine Legislation during the Federation's Annual Meeting on September 2, 2020.

For over a decade, Mr. Prager has served as the Legislative Chair of the Pennsylvania Federation of Dog Clubs (PFDC). As bills are proposed, Prager and his team evaluate the proposals, look for unintended consequences, and establish a position to support or oppose the legislation.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

The U.S. House of Representatives and 12 states are currently in session or special session, and several additional states are expected to hold special sessions and/or interim committee hearings over the next couple of months. To date, AKC Government Relations has tracked more than 3,000 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.

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 is currently tracking approximately 750 regulatory proposals, the majority of which concern land use/hunting regulations and those governing the practice of veterinary medicine.

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). 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).

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

### 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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