

AKC GR Update for Delegates Parent Club Committee Meeting, June 2021

Currently, 23 states are in session. Congress is on Memorial Day break, and scheduled to return the week of June 13. To date, AKC GR is tracking more than 2,100 bills at the state level (as well as local and federal bills) that could impact dog ownership, the wellbeing of dogs or AKC events and operations. This includes positive as well as negative legislation. This count does not include the 555 bills related to COVID that could impact dog sports, clubs etc.

To date, AKC GR has released **175 geo-targeted legislative action alerts** on important legislation asking club members to take action.

As of June 1, the most common issues we are addressing (aside from “covid” and “other” are: Animal Cruelty, Working Dogs, Animal Control, Rescues/Shelters, and bills potentially impacting AKC events.

AKC GR will be sending a separate legislative update to delegates just ahead of the Delegates Meeting.

PAC Outreach to Parent Clubs – Many parent and specialty clubs auction off or charge for reserved grooming, RV or parking spaces and prime ringside seating. The AKC PAC is launching a fundraising initiative in which we are asking every national specialty to set aside one or more of each of these spaces, and to have the purchaser(s) of those spaces to donate that money to the AKC PAC instead. *Every parent club delegate (along with secretaries and presidents along and national specialty show chairs) has been emailed a letter from the AKC PAC, asking for your assistance and participation in supporting this effort. Aside from direct political engagement, this is one of the easiest ways that parent clubs can help support our government relations efforts and protect our breeds.*

Highlights of Recent Successes - AKC GR is pleased to be able to report many successes so far this year. Here is a list of a few top items. A list of major successes is available online at www.akcgr.org and will be provided to delegates along with the standard legislative updates next week.

California – Assembly Bill 702 would have regulated every breeder in the state. AKC met extensively with the author and key committee members and staff, activated local clubs and hobbyists, coordinated meetings for clubs with their Assembly members, submitted alternative language, and partnered with key stakeholders in opposition, including California animal shelters. The bill was held in committee, with reports stating that no member was going to vote for it. It has been tabled until 2022 and the author and committee have committed to work with AKC on alternative solutions in the interim.

Chicago – In May 2020, a proposal was introduced by the Chicago City Council that supposedly sought to close a loophole in their pet store ban to stop irresponsible sellers from misrepresenting themselves as rescues to avoid regulation while access new markets. The fact that irresponsible breeders are misrepresenting themselves as rescues is a testament to the problems with bans on the sale of purpose-bred pets by regulated breeders at pet stores.

As introduced, the bill would have required hobby breeder to obtain a pet facility license (requiring on site staff and locations only in non-residential areas). For the past year, AKC and our state federation met with key council members, submitted written testimony, activated local breeders, submitted an op-ed to local media, and testified in council hearings. As a result, all language regulating hobby breeders was removed from the final proposal passed by the council in May 2021.

Tennessee - Senate Bill 511 sought to create a new commercial breeder licensing program similar to a program that was allowed to sunset in 2014 due to its ineffectiveness. AKC GR provided direct advocacy with key Tennessee lawmakers, provided action alerts and testimony in opposition, and worked with Tennessee residents to express their opposition as constituents. The Senate Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee considered the bill and did not advance it.

Texas - Senate Bill 323 would have expanded the state's licensed breeders program to include many hobby breeders by reducing the thresholds for ownership and sales that currently exempt many hobby breeders. AKC presented strong, sustained opposition to SB 323, which resulted in the measure not being scheduled for committee consideration.

Texas - House Bill 1083 sought to provide for the quick termination of ownership rights in animals that are impounded by an animal shelter. AKC expressed strong, sustained opposition to HB 1083, which did not advance.

GR relies on email and use of our legislative action center located at www.akcgr.org for communicating with club members about important issues. *We urge anyone who has questions about an issue to contact AKC GR directly at 919-816-3720 or doglaw@akc.org.* We're here to help!