



## What's New in Government Relations

As we reflect on 2024, a theme that comes to mind is "perseverance." The past year saw a variety of challenges for dog owners and breeders, from breeding bans and restrictive legislation to mandatory spay/neuter proposals across the country. However, through the collective efforts of engaged dog lovers, clubs, and AKC GR, many of these harmful proposals were either amended, postponed, or defeated. Notable victories included preventing restrictive regulations on hobby breeders, advocating for the welfare of working dogs, and pushing back against bans on breeds or even the breeding of dogs with specific characteristics.

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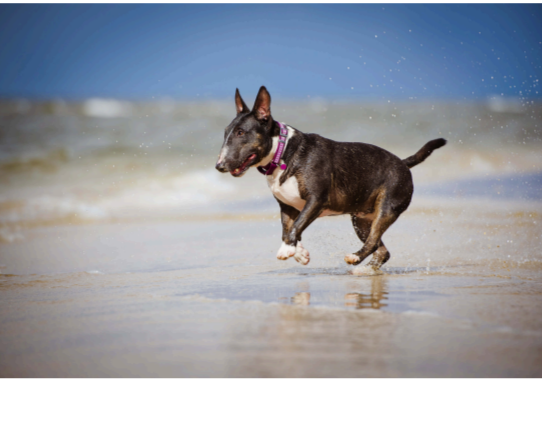
## CDC to Revisit Dog Importation Rules in 2025

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided public notice that it will [propose revisions and certifications to the requirements for the importation of dogs](#) that it finalized earlier in 2024.

The dog import rule that was implemented in August 2024 was designed to limit the public health risk of dogs being imported into the U.S. with DMRVV (canine rabies). AKC strongly supports the intent of protecting pet and public health but remains concerned that the 2024 rule is overly broad and fails to recognize the range of factors that contribute to or mitigate actual risk. AKC continues to work with a diverse group of stakeholders and lawmakers to express these concerns.

A new advanced notice of public rulemaking is expected in the first half of 2025. AKC will continue to follow this issue and provide updates as it becomes available.

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## Canine Legislation in Review 2024

From emerging issues such as bans on breeding dogs with certain characteristics, to a plethora of breeding restrictions and mandatory spay/neuter proposals in local cities and counties throughout the country, 2024 saw dog owners and breeders facing a wide variety of legislative challenges.

Yet, through the perseverance of engaged dog lovers, AKC state federations, clubs, and breeders working in conjunction with AKC GR, many of these proposals were significantly amended, postponed, or defeated.

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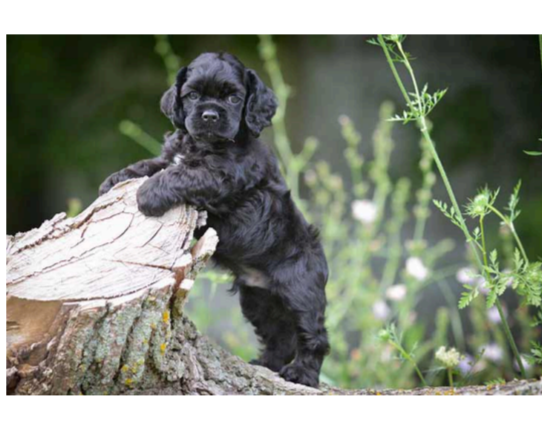


## Torture Breeding Part II – After Ojai: Taking on the Fight to Protect Our Breeds

In the last edition of this column, we gave one subsection this title: Bills to ban or criminalize breed characteristics and their breeders are here to stay.

We wish we hadn't been right. Not long after submitting that column, for the October 2024 publication, AKC received word that a small city in California did what we'd hoped no American jurisdiction would ever do. Ojai, a city of approximately 7,500, quietly enacted a first-in-the-nation law that prohibits the breeding of dogs and cats with "congenital anatomical features" that it claims are likely to cause the animal or its offspring to suffer pain, deformity, or difficulty expressing natural behaviors, difficulty breathing, difficulty with physical exertion or exercise, or difficulty breeding.

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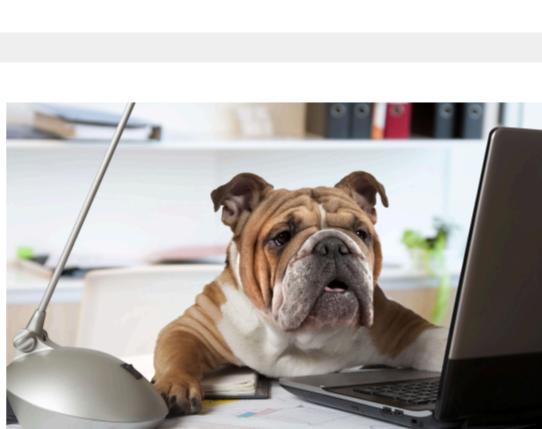


## Ten New Year's Resolutions for Clubs, Breeders, and Dog Owners

While the elections may be over, work is just beginning in all 50 states as lawmakers are preparing for the upcoming sessions. It's a good time to reflect on the many successes for dogs we saw over the last year, but also to remember that there is still work ahead.

AKC Government Relations offers the following New Year's resolutions for clubs, breeders, owners, and handlers to ensure an effective, strong voice for dogs in the coming year.

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## Watch Our Blindside!

In football, a quarterback must protect the side of his body he can't easily see, i.e., his "blindside." If he or his teammates don't protect against this vulnerability, the opposing team can easily hit or sack the quarterback with little warning, usually hindering the team's ability to advance and score.

The same idea applies to those of us who defend against anti-breeder and anti-breeding legislation. We have to protect against our vulnerabilities, and not knowing about pending proposals impacting our dogs is one of our biggest ones.

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## Nicholas King Presents 'Selection & Development of Working Canines' Webinar

On Wednesday, the AKC Detection Dog Task Force (DDTF) welcomed industry expert and Patriotic Puppy Program Mentor, Nicholas King, of [Von Der King Kennels and Training](#) (VDK) for its latest educational webinar, "Selection & Development of Working Canines". King delved into a wide variety of topics including cost analysis, building your individual skill set, selection of puppies/dogs and development of a breeding program and business.

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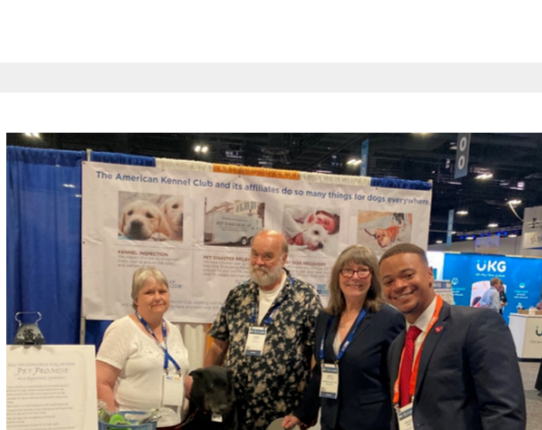


## Outgoing President Honored at Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Breeders Annual Meeting

Recently, the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Breeders, the American Kennel Club (AKC), and the AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) each recognized outgoing Federation president, Mariane Herndon, for her many years of dedicated leadership during the VFDCB annual meeting.

Founded in 1971, the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Breeders (VFDCB) has been a strong voice for purebred dogs in the Commonwealth of Virginia and continues to be one of the AKC's strongest and most active state federations.

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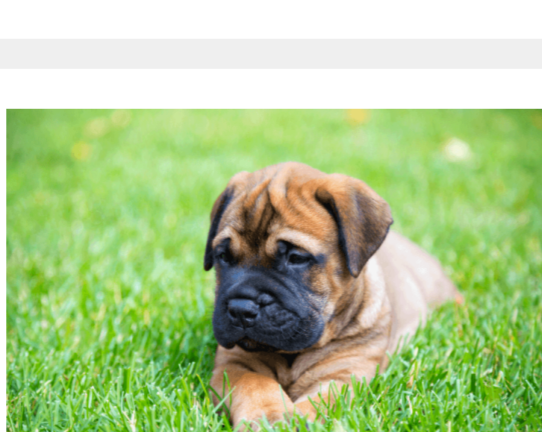


## AKC Talks Dogs at the 2024 National League of Cities Conference

AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) met with municipal leaders from across the U.S. at the 2024 National League of Cities (NLC) City Summit on November 13-15 in Tampa, Florida. Patty Van Sicklen, AKC GR Southeastern Regional Manager, was joined by three dogs and their owners who represented the Florida Association of Kennel Clubs and area dog training and pet therapy groups.

The NLC City Summit is an annual conference that provides opportunities for city officials to attend seminars, collaborate with peers, and confer with policy experts. This year's events brought together more than 4,000 attendees from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

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## AKC GR Advocates for Dog Owners and Breeders for Dog Owners and Local PA Leaders Conference

The American Kennel Club Government Relations Department (AKC GR) recently participated in the Pennsylvania State Extension Boroughs (PSAB) annual Fall Conference, which offered an opportunity for interaction with elected and appointed officials from the Commonwealth's 755 Boroughs.

As one of only 30 exhibitors, Charley Hall, AKC Government Relations Mid-Atlantic Regional Manager, staffed an educational booth that provided numerous handouts demonstrating AKC's expertise on all issues related to responsible ownership of dogs and dog care. GR provided information on the economic impact of the more than 1450 AKC dogs events held in the Commonwealth, information about AKC's charitable efforts including canine health research and disaster relief, and AKC expert canine policy resources.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

Linked below are some highlights of pending legislation impacting dog ownership and dog owners' rights across the country. For more information on these issues, and information on how you can get involved, visit the AKC GR Legislative Action Center [here](#).

Visit the [2025 Legislation Tracking map](#) for the most up-to-date information on state and federal legislation. This site, updated each week, provides the latest bill text, status, and links to legislative alerts posted by the AKC.

In addition to tracking and responding to legislative proposals, the U.S. Federal government, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia. [AKC GR's Regulatory Resource Center](#) provides updates on federal and state regulatory issues that may impact dog owners.

<a href="#">Federal</a>	<a href="#">State</a>	<a href="#">Local</a>
Issues that may affect all dog owners in the U.S.	Issues specific to your state	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.

