

Dog Legislation Council of Canada

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September 23, 2016

City councillors
Montréal, Québec

Dear Sir/Madam:

In June of this year, the Dog Legislation Council of Canada offered assistance and experience to Mayor Coderre in drafting an effective animal control bylaw.

Three months later, we find ourselves in the same position again - offering help and hoping for a reasonable and personal reply, rather than an automated computer-generated e-mail response.

We would like to put aside, for the moment, the many arguments against breed-specific legislation such as breed identification problems, behaviour prediction by appearance, mixed breed dogs, and the targeting of purebred dogs, some of which don't exist in the entire province of Québec.

We would like to focus on one thing only:

Breed specific legislation does not work.

It has been proven, over and over again, that breed-specific legislation fails to reduce dog bites and fails to reduce serious injuries or deaths from dog attacks.

It is possible that some city councillors believe that authorities will be able to identify every "pit bull" in Montréal or that "pit bulls" are inherently dangerous or any number of other scientifically disproven theories.

To the citizens of Montréal, to the voters of Montréal, those theories are irrelevant.

The only question they have is, "Are you going to keep us safe?"

The data proves, unequivocally, that breed-specific legislation fails to do that. The experts agree, unanimously, that breed-specific legislation fails to do that.

The experiences of Ontario, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Denver, Ohio, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, and Australia, as well as countless municipalities throughout North America and numerous studies by scientific experts prove that breed-specific legislation costs more money, fails to improve public safety, and kills thousands of unoffending family pets based solely on the way they look.

Finally, a couple of very important closing points:

1. Just in case some city councillors have not read the bylaw in its entirety, there are some clauses that should concern any animal lover, regardless of their position on this subject:

During the transitional phase until special licensing is granted to "pit bulls", these dogs will be required to be muzzled



at all times, including inside their homes and cars. There is no exception for puppies, old dogs, sick dogs, therapy dogs, or service dogs. After the transitional phase, they will be required to be muzzled in their own backyards. There is also no exception after the transitional phase for puppies, old dogs, sick dogs, therapy dogs, or service dogs. Any animal behaviourist will tell you that the negative impact on these dogs will actually create fear and aggression that was not there before.

Every "pit bull" in every shelter or rescue group in Montréal will be required to be destroyed immediately. There is no transfer of ownership allowed so if an owner dies, their dog must be killed. There is no provision for dogs who defend their property, their owner, or themselves. Those dogs must be killed. Any dog that is found without a muzzle/microchip/tag or that it is picked up by animal control for any reason must be killed.

2. We've noticed an increase in letters to city councillors from U.S. based anti "pit bull" groups. It can be overwhelming to receive the massive amount of "data" that they send to city officials. It is important to note that these groups consist of a very small number of people who get their data from a single person in the United States. His data has been carefully analyzed and it is the conclusion of analysts and researchers that his data of bites, deaths, and canine population has been highly falsified, is incomplete and incorrect to the point of being unusable, and cannot be relied upon to make any conclusions regarding dog bites and public safety. If you would like more information about that, we would be happy to send it to you. In the meantime, his supporters (even "disciples" would not be too strong a word) inundate thousands of websites and Facebook groups with copies of this data and then distribute it to the general public through journalists such as Lori Welbourne (Vancouver Province), Barbara Kay (National Post), and Marie-Claude Malboeuf (La Presse). The latter's "investigative reports" have now managed to become a quoted source in the working group report commissioned by the government of Québec and, as such, are going to influence provincial policy decisions, all based on one man's falsified data in the United States. That alone should worry you enough to, at the very least, delay this decision until you have had the opportunity to verify the data you are being sent.

If you would like any more information about fair and effective animal control legislation that has been proven to reduce dog bites and improve public safety, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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