

Stabilize housing for families living in public housing by removing arbitrary pet restrictions

Support SB 614 HB 721



Florida law is clear: municipalities may not address dangerous dogs using laws, rules, or policies that are breed specific. SB 614 and HB 721 extend that clarity to Public Housing Authorities.

BREED BANS ARE OVERREACH

Legislators were clear when they last amended FL's dangerous dog law (767.14): local government shall not be involved in telling people which breed of dog they may own. Congress and HUD consider Public Housing Authorities quasi-governmental entities based on their organization, purpose, and structure. As it stands, 767.14 likely already applies to PHA's; however, Florida has more than 100 public housing authorities; more than 60% of those whose policies we examined restricted the breed of dog a family could own; 100% of them restricted the dog's size to under 40 pounds.

BREED BANS DON'T MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER

Breed restrictions are antiquated attempts to reduce liability in a community. However, studies conducted by the National Canine Research Council (NCRC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) acknowledge breed is not a determining factor in the likelihood of a dog to bite¹ and that breed specific legislation is not the best tool for keeping communities safe.² Public Housing Authorities will not experience any additional liability when they include all breeds/sizes on their properties because Florida law insulates landlords from liability when they do not know or have reason to know that a dog owned by a tenant is dangerous.

HOUSING IS THE #1 REASON DOGS ARE SURRENDERED TO FL SHELTERS

Florida shelters are funded by taxpayer dollars. In 2020, Best Friends data shows that more than 30,000 dogs were surrendered to FL shelters; housing was the number one reason for surrender. Arbitrary breed and size restrictions in public housing directly contribute to the financial strain animal shelters place on local government.

THESE BILLS WILL KEEP PETS WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN STABLE HOUSING

Removing arbitrary restrictions around dog breed will neutralize a major barrier to stable housing the families most in need of stability face.

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¹ [https:// nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/injurious-dog-bites/dog-bite-related-fatalities/](https://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/injurious-dog-bites/dog-bite-related-fatalities/)

² <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5226a1.htm>