

## Why BSL Is Ineffective

Dog problems are almost always created by irresponsible owners and are not limited to breed. When breeds are singled out as dangerous, responsibility is removed from the dog owner which is where it belongs. Irresponsible people are also less likely to follow the law.

By limiting the ability of citizens to own certain breeds, responsible, law abiding citizens will shy away from those breeds. These are the types of owners that communities need to encourage, not drive away.

Communities that have instituted such bans often find that the irresponsible owners and the criminals who use dogs for illegal purposes simply switch to another breed.

Breeds and mixes are hard to identify and often dogs are mislabeled and destroyed based on paranoia and prejudice and also punishes those that are good canine citizens. Many breeds function as assistance dogs, therapy dogs, search and rescue dogs, drug-sniffing dogs and police dogs. These dogs and owners are driven from the community.

The dog most commonly restricted is the "pit bull". A "pit bull" is a type of dog, not a breed. The term "pit bull" encompasses American Staffordshire Terriers, American Pit Bull Terriers, American Bulldogs and any dog of any breed that looks similar. This affects well over 25 breeds plus countless mixed breed dogs.

**BSL** doesn't address the issues that are responsible for the overwhelming majority of dog attacks:

- ◆ *Unaltered dogs*
- ◆ *Chained dogs*
- ◆ *Roaming dogs*

## Are Dogs A Real Danger?

### Fatal Dogs Attacks in Ohio

- ◆ since 1965, there have been 17 fatal attacks
- ◆ the victims were 6 adults, 11 kids
- ◆ 5 of the children were attacked attempting to interact with a chained dog
- ◆ 3 children were infants left unsupervised with unfamiliar dogs
- ◆ **NONE** of the dogs were spayed or neutered
- ◆ at least 11 different breeds caused these deaths

In spite of the reckless and dangerous ownership practices of some dog owners, dogs still pose an incredibly low risk for causing a fatality:

## Numbers Don't Lie

There are approximately 52 million dogs in the United States, and as many as 4.8 million are classified as pit bull.

*Toledo v. Tellings (March 2006).*

Common sense would dictate that if breed of dog was the primary determining factor in all dog attacks, it would stand to reason that the statistics on pit bull bites would be astronomically high. They simply are not.

**Please make your voice heard and say "NO" to breed specific legislation.**

For Ohio info on BSL visit:

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# BSL

## Breed Specific Legislation

### What Is Breed Specific Legislation?

Breed specific legislation (also called "BSL" or "dangerous dog laws") are laws that legally classify certain dogs as "dangerous" based solely on the dog's Breed or appearance.

Dog owners with dogs classified as "dangerous" may be compelled to take certain actions in order to keep their dogs. At its extreme, breed specific legislation bans dog owners from owning certain breeds altogether.

Dogs commonly affected by breed specific legislation include: Pit Bull Type dogs, Rottweilers, German Shepherds, Akitas, Chows, Doberman Pinschers, Huskies and Wolf hybrids.

**There are currently over 75 breeds affected by BSL throughout the United States.**

## Imagine.

You have lived with your canine companion for six years. From the moment you brought him into your home, he has not left your side. He lies under your feet while you read the evening newspaper and sleeps at the foot of your bed at night. He is a sweet soul who would never (and has never) hurt anyone. But, you have been ordered to get rid of your beloved dog for one simple reason: he is a pit bull.

Residents in many cities throughout Ohio cannot keep a pit bull, or any dog displaying the physical traits of a pit bull (short hair, muscular body, blocky head), within city limits. Period. No exceptions. No grandfather clause.

Faced with the horrible prospect of giving up your dog or giving up your home, what would you do? The rescues are full, the shelters cannot legally offer your dog for adoption; often the only option is to kill your dog. The dog who licked away your children's tears and brought so much love and laughter into your home. Your best friend.

### *What would you do?*



### Who Will Be Affected by BSL?

BSL affects **all** of us! Officials would like you to think that only irresponsible dog owners will be affected by BSL. Sadly, this is not true. When a breed is to be restricted, all owners of the breed will be affected **regardless of how responsible the owner is**. Good, responsible, law abiding owners will lose great loving dogs. Criminals will ignore the law and harbor the banned breed(s) or simply choose another breed to manipulate.

Although such bans might comfort individuals who have had unpleasant experiences with particular breeds or have heard of attacks by specific dog breeds in the media, the bans do not act to effectively regulate the behavior of any breed or of dogs and their owners collectively. The bans carry with them too much potential for arbitrary or improper enforcement: inaccurate breed identification by officials, difficulty enforcing breed bans against mixed-breed dogs, animal control, and court system overload, and the potential for not identifying a genuinely "dangerous dog" as such because it doesn't fall into the specified breed categories. .

### Suggested Alternatives to BSL

- ◆ **Enforce Leash Laws.** Leash laws are usually weakly enforced and carry only minor penalties. Many dog attacks are committed by a loose dog running off their property.
- ◆ **Institute Anti Tethering Laws.** Chaining/tethering dogs is inhumane and often causes aggression. Chained dogs account for 25% of all fatal dog attacks.
- ◆ **Regulate breeders.** Backyard breeders and puppy mills produce mass quantities of puppies that are genetically compromised, both behaviorally and health-wise. They breed for money, without concern for good temperament or public safety.
- ◆ **Fund public spay/neuter initiatives.** Unneutered dogs, particularly males, are far more likely to attack a human than either neutered males or spayed females. Unneutered male dogs also tend to escape and wander more than neutered males..
- ◆ **Dog behavior education.** A breakdown in communications between dog and human can have serious consequences for both parties. In particular, young children should be taught in school how to avoid dog bites.

