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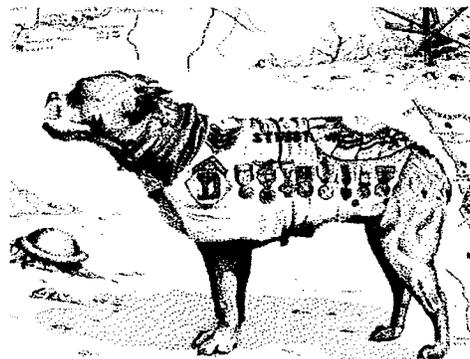
TO: Montana Legislature (61st), Local Government Committee
FROM: Bridget M. Petrucelli 
RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 191 (BREED-SPECIFIC LEGISLATION)

Imposing breed-specific legislation upon the "American Pit Bull Terrier" is very un-American. Pit Bulls have been a symbol of American strength and spirit. They are search and rescue animals, service animals, members of our armed forces, narcotics officers, and above all, man's best friend.

Bills like this arise as a reactive response to a dog bite. Clearly, the dog of interest this time is the Pit Bull; however, next time, maybe the dog will be a Rottweiler, Akita, Doberman, or German shepherd. I have personally been attacked and otherwise harassed by a variety of dogs throughout my childhood and adult life in Montana—not one has been a Pit Bull. Growing up just outside of Whitehall, our family dog was killed on our property by an uncontrolled neighbor dog that routinely terrorized and injured our pets, and you guessed it, this dangerous neighbor dog was not a Pit Bull.

The problem is not the breed; rather, the problem lies in human responsibility. We must accept responsibility for ensuring our children behave appropriately around dogs; we must accept responsibility and accountability as dog owners; and when necessary, we must responsibly draft, pass, and enforce judicious and just laws.

Teaching my child about discrimination should not come through his own first-hand experience. There are more responsible ways to address the real problems surrounding this issue. For example, the dangerous dog legislation proposed by the Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions (Vet Med Today: Canine Aggression Task Force, JAVMA, Vol. 218, No. 11, June 1, 2001, pp. 1732-1749) not only presents the results of their comprehensive study, but provides a template for dangerous dog legislation. I encourage you to throw out House Bill No. 191, study this issue, look at the alternatives, listen to the experts, and demonstrate that Montana can protect individual freedoms without compromising our American principles.



Sergeant Stubby: Decorated WWI Hero

EXHIBIT 10
DATE 1-22-2009
HB HB 191

30 Paul Gulch Road
Whitehall, MT 59759-9624
Tel.: (406) 287-5642
January 21, 2009

Re: Legislature of the State of Montana, House of Representatives, House Bill No. 191.

I am writing this in opposition to HB 191. As all dog breeds can show aggression, it would seem unfair to single out one in particular, the pit bull, to be prohibited.

If laws already enacted regulating animal control were being complied with, there should not be a problem and thus, there would not be a need for another law.

Your consideration of this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Patricia L. Hoopes

30 Paul Gulch Road
Whitehall, MT 59759-9624
Tel.: (406) 287-5642

House of Representatives
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59601

This letter is in opposition to HB 191. I believe any dog will behave the way he is trained to behave. Abuse and neglect have always made man's best friend into a monster, no matter what breed.

Please put me on your list as a friend of all dog breeds. I have spent many hours of enjoyment around the pit bull breed, and find them to be true loving companions.

Sincerely,



Clifford J. Hoopes

To members of the Montana State Legislature,

I am writing in opposition to HB 191 regarding regulations on pit bulls in the state of Montana.

I understand that canines of this breed can be dangerous and cases of attacks have been reported. But my belief is that owners of these animals should be held responsible for the reported violence, rather than the dogs. Aggression is not born in these animals, it is bred through purposeful training or neglect. In cases where pit bull owners are irresponsible, I agree that the dogs can be dangerous. The owners of dangerous dogs are not going to follow this bill or even be bothered by it because they will ignore the law.

This bill would take kind animals away from responsible owners like our neighbors and friends Joe and Bridgett Petrucelli and their 8 year old son Dylan. These are the type of people you are punishing. Their dogs are an active part of their family life

The couple owns two pit bulls, Zoe and Kane. I am a protective mother of two children, yet I feel completely comfortable and safe when our children visit the Petrucelli residence.

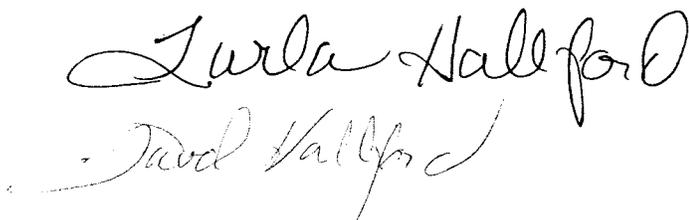
In fact, our son Ben, 10, has cared for the dogs on occasion when the family has been out of town. Kane and Zoe are very well behaved and I have never seen any sort of aggression with either of these dogs. They have had extensive training because Joe and Bridgett are responsible dog owners.

My point is, do not punish responsible owners of pit bulls by passing this bill. I agree dog attacks should not happen, but this bill is too broad and should be limited if not thrown out altogether.

Please do not pass HB 191. Thank you for your time and service to the taxpayers of Montana.

Sincerely,

Twila and David Hallford

Handwritten signatures of Twila Hallford and David Hallford. Twila's signature is in cursive and reads "Twila Hallford". David's signature is also in cursive and reads "David Hallford".

To whom it may concern,

I am writing you in regards to my new adopted dog Zeek. I adopted him last week from Dog Logic where I am currently employed. He has displayed nothing but love and affection since I first met him. He is playful and he isn't food or toy aggressive. He doesn't sound like your stereotypical Pit-bull, but that's just the thing he isn't. And neither have any of the other pit-bulls I have had interaction with.

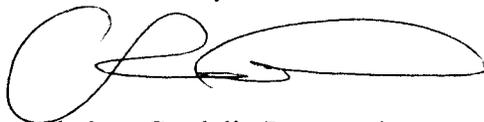
Before I started working with dogs I used to think that pit-bulls were a dangerous breed. However I have since worked in dog grooming and kenneling, and have learned about the dangers of stereotypes, not pit-bulls; and also the important role that the owner plays in developing their dogs' manners and personality.

Pit-bulls are a sturdy, strong built breed and because of this *some* less savory individuals will breed and purchase them for unfavorable reasons. Owners like this get pit-bulls to be guard dogs, or for fighting and this is human error, not canine. An owner like this encourages inherent canine aggression, (that exists in all dogs to varying degrees), rather than working with and training the dog to be well behaved and submissive to humans. No matter what breed a dog is, if it is raised for aggression, it will be aggressive.

I would be crushed if I had to give up Zeek. Just because some dog owners are reckless and irresponsible, doesn't mean my dog should suffer. Further more, there is no need for him to be muzzled every time he goes to a public place. The only dangerous thing about his mouth is that maybe he will lick your face with his stinky breath. I know I am biased, but I have plenty of experience with dog aggression and with numerous breeds. Neither Zeek nor any of the other Pit-bulls that come to Dog Logic deserve to be put down any more than any of the other breeds.

I think that it is humanly irresponsible to place the blame on an entire breed of animal, (that we humans never the less bred), when it is merely reckless ownership that gives them a bad rap in the first place.

Most Sincerely,



Chelsea Cordelia Raymond
701-388-4853
chelcrc@yahoo.com