

Breed Specific Legislation

Alabama Humane Federation does NOT support any form of breed specific legislation (BSL) which targets specific breed(s) for restrictions or bans.

Alabama Humane Federation DOES support reasonable, non-breed specific, dangerous dog laws that will protect responsible owner's rights and promote a safe community for all residents.

BSL often specifies actions such as:

- banning ownership or mandating the immediate destruction of a particular breed
- mandating spay/neuter for all dogs of the identified breed(s)
- requiring microchip implantation in certain breeds
- requiring owners of 'banned' breeds to have liability insurance for their dogs
- prohibiting people convicted of a felony from owning specific breeds
- prohibiting certain 'classes of individuals' from owning specific breeds
- making certain public areas off-limits to banned breeds
- requiring identified breeds to wear muzzles in public
- requiring "vicious dog" signs on the outside of the residence where a 'BSL' dog lives

While many think BSL only targets Pit Bull Terriers, the following breeds have been the target of BSL across our country: Airedale Terrier, Akbash, Akita, Alapaha Blue Blood Bulldog, Alaskan Malamute, Alsatian Shepherd, American Bulldog, American Husky, American Staffordshire Terrier, American Wolfdog, Anatolian Shepherd, Arikara Dog, Australian Cattle Dog, Australian Shepherd, Belgian Malinois, Belgian Sheepdog, Belgian Turvuren, Blue Heeler, Boerbol, Borzoi, Boston Terrier, Bouvier Des Flandres, Boxer, Bulldog, Bull Terrier, Bull Mastiff, Cane Corso, Catahoula Leopard Dog, Caucasian Shepherd, Chinese Shar Pei, Chow-Chow, Colorado Dog, Doberman Pinscher, Dogo De Argentino, Dogue De Bordeaux, English Mastiffs, English Springer Spaniel, Eskimo Dog, Estrela Mountain Dog, Fila Brasileiro, Fox Terrier, French Bulldog, German Shepherd Dog, Golden Retriever, Greenland Husky, Great Dane, Great Pyrenees , Italian Mastiff, Kangal Dog, Keeshond, Komondor, Kotezebue Husky, Kuvaz, Labrador Retriever, Leonberger, Mastiff, Neopolitan Mastiff, Newfoundland, Otterhound, Presa De Canario, Presa De Mallorquin, Pug, Rottweiler, Saarloos Wolfhond, Saint Bernard, Samoyed, Scottish Deerhound, Siberian Husky, Spanish Mastiff, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Timber Shepherd, Tosa Inu, Tundra Shepherd, Wolf Spitz and even mixed breeds. Is your breed in this list?

In many instances where cities have enacted BSL, US courts have later found these laws to be unconstitutional:

- *The Alabama Supreme Court - WAF/Sheila Tack v. Huntsville Alabama (2002)*: upheld a decision that pit bulls were no more inherently dangerous than any other breed. This case was very costly to the city of Huntsville.

- *The Toledo Municipal Court- Tellings v. City of Toledo CRB-02-15267 (ACF 2005)*: ruled American Pit Bull Terriers are not dangerous and granted dog owner's due process rights.

- *The Ohio Supreme Court - State v. Cowan (103 Ohio St. 3d 144, 2004-Ohio-4777)(2004)* struck down ORC955:11 which declared the "Pit Bull" vicious, because it violates our rights to be heard (due process).

- Westbury, NY (Spring 2003) court ruled that the city's BSL was unconstitutional and repealed the law.

What BSL does NOT do:

- prevent dog bites
- improve public safety
- provide protections against the misidentification of a breed
- make irresponsible dog owners responsible or accountable
- take into account how an owner has raised, trained, or managed their dog
- account for the dog's actual behavior
- save tax dollars

What BSL does do:

- punishes responsible dog owners
- increases surrender of dogs to shelters and increases euthanasia in shelters
- criminalizes owners of designated breeds
- increases costs to government in lawsuits

BSL is opposed by every single animal welfare/canine organization in the United States and AHF will work to oppose BSL in Alabama.