

**Suggestions on the Dangerous Dog bill.
Respectfully submitted by Scott Ringwelski**

I do not criticize without offering alternatives. If nothing else, the easiest fix on this is to edit out article 3 on the law as it is arbitrary and will create major problems. Focus instead on owners and not on breeds.

Since the Denver law is exclusively punitive in nature, the other suggestion is to table the current idea in favor of a more positive and progressive alternative that is created by our own city...after all, we are a dog friendly city and a leader in smart legislation.

Here is the plan for a Progressive Pet Law.

1. Create a canvassing arm of our animal control authority (not the humane society). Have the continually comb through the city checking on scofflaw areas where junkyard dogs, gang member ownership, dog fighting and other illicit activities occur. Of course, they will check all city neighborhoods.
2. There are state and federal agricultural grants for domesticated animals that go begging because no one knows that they are available. The city obtains some of these monies to fund this project of creating responsible animal ownership programs. This helps pay for the canvassing program.
3. A refundable fee is placed on all license elements in the city, and fines for those who don't comply. The additional fee is to encourage pet owners to attend a basic pet ownership class, held at various times, places and days for convenience. These classes serve three purposes
 - A Teach basic responsibility and ownership skills
 - B Teach each owner characteristics about the breed of dog they are adopting.
 - C Determine is an individual dog harbors aggressive tendencies by universal standards.
 - D A separate, basic training skills class on how to work with and socialize dogs would also be required. Dogs deemed aggressive would have to achieve a Canine Good Citizen award.

The city might partner with local pet business or major manufacturers of pet items to offer premiums of free or discounted collars, leashes, or dog food or other supplies.

Once again, they get a refund of the fee for completing attendance at the two classes, which the owner is allowed eight months to complete.

This educates and builds understanding across the community. It offers positive enforcement instead of negative enforcement. It promotes responsible pet ownership and builds community relations across the board. It funds itself. Finally, it provides the city with an iron clad defense if existing laws are broken...the pet owner is now certified that they have knowledge and accept responsibility for their pet...under the auspices of the city.

Let's be sure of our focus. Laws are for humans, not for animals who have no say about the captive environment they must endure.