



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®



IN SESSION

AKC'S CONGRESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

The American Kennel Club's Newsletter for Members of Congress and their Staff

PERSPECTIVES

*We're more than champion dogs...
We're the dog's champion.*

AKC Supports Improved Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act, Not Restrictive Bills that Undermine Animal Care

Lawmakers are often asked to introduce or sponsor legislation that amends the AWA, but few have the time or resources to study the existing regulations or become experts on its requirements.

To address this concern, AKC recently joined with stakeholders from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the National Association for Biomedical Research, and the Zoological Association of America to provide an educational overview of the AWA, its current requirements and recent regulatory updates impacting licensees to staff who handle Agriculture issues. Each group outlined a different aspect of the AWA, focusing on their area of expertise and the experience of the regulated community.

The briefing familiarized staff with the
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CONGRESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Congresswoman

KAT CAMMACK (FL-3)



Photos courtesy from the office of Congresswoman Kat Cammack

Congresswoman Kat Cammack has always had animals surrounding her. Born in Denver, Colorado, she grew up on a 55-acre ranch, where in addition to the calves and cattle, dogs constituted a huge part of her childhood. Rep. Cammack now proudly serves Florida's third congressional district, located in northern Florida.

From a young age she participated in 4-H programs and local rodeos. Eventually, she decided to turn her career to politics and served as former Congressman Ted Yoho's Chief of Staff for several years. The two seemed to be a good fit because, among, other things, she was drawn to the former Congressman's veterinary knowledge and deep love of animals. When Rep. Yoho retired in 2020, Rep. Cammack knew it was her time to run for his seat.

Now Rep. Cammack works in an office decorated with pictures of her family's former dogs, two labs called Jazzy and Hunter, who have since passed away. Since then, Rep. Cammack and her husband have been raising chickens, ducks, and a talkative cockatiel named Thor. The dog void is filled by two special canines, Franklin and Madison, who often grace her Washington

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AKC is More than Champion Dogs, We're the Dog's Champion



The American Kennel Club is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting responsible dog ownership, preserving purebred dogs, the health and well-being of all dogs, and advocating for science-based canine policy that is reasonable, enforceable and non-discriminatory.

Did you know?

- AKC is the world's largest all-breed dog registry.
- AKC has more than 5,000 local and breed-based dog clubs throughout the U.S.
- AKC hosts over *25,000 dog events per year with more than 3.5 million entries*, including breed conformation, agility, obedience, field trials, and more.
- AKC events can *inject more than \$2.15 million into the community* during each event.
- Nationwide, AKC dog events can *generate more than \$1.5 billion a year* in local spending.
- AKC's *Detection Dog Task Force* works to help address the shortage of high-quality U.S. -bred and -trained explosive detection dogs to protect public safety and national security.
- For more than a decade, AKC Humane Fund has provided *grants to shelters that house victims of domestic abuse with their pets*.
- *The AKC Museum of the Dog* preserves, interprets, and celebrates the role of dogs in society and educates the public about the human-canine bond through its *1,700-piece rotating collection and 4,000-volume library*.
- AKC Pet Disaster Relief program helps local Emergency Management *provide animal care services immediately following a disaster*, including a donation of a trailer stocked with essential supplies to *house over 65 pets in the critical first few days* following a disaster. To date, more than *100 emergency relief trailers* have been donated to communities around the nation.
- AKC Canine Health Foundation *funds research projects* that focus on all aspects of the physical, mental, and social well-being of dogs. AKC CHF's *\$67 millions in grants* has resulted in *over 1,135 research grants*, countless canine health projects, and *932 peer-reviewed publications*.
- AKC co-founded *American Service Dog Access Coalition (ASDAC)*, a charitable organization of industry leaders working together to establish Service Dog Pass,[™] an authoritative, verifiable service dog credential to establish and incentivize compliance with behavioral and health standards for service dogs and to address fraudulent misrepresentation of pets as service dogs.
- AKC Reunite has reunited more than *650,000 lost pets with their owners*, *donates microchip scanners to shelters*, and helps reunite pets displaced by storms and other disasters. The Adopt A K9 Cop Program has *donated funding for police K-9s to more than 200 police departments*.
- AKC's Rescue Network provides *financial assistance to non-profit rescue groups*. More than *450 AKC Rescue Network groups* are located across the U.S.; the largest rescue network in America.
- AKC has a dedicated team of field agents who *visit and inspect kennels to educate breeders and ensure proper care and conditions* of AKC-registered dogs and accurate record keeping. Since 2000, AKC field agents have conducted over *80,000 inspections nationwide*.
- AKC created the Canine Good Citizen[®] program - A 10-step test that encourages and certifies dogs who have good manners. Over *1,200,000 dogs* have earned CGC certification.
- AKC provides teachers nationwide with academically rigorous lesson plans and activities that incorporate core subject areas for grades K-12 and teach about responsible dog ownership.
- And much more!



DC office with their presence.

“They love to greet guests and receive pets. They’re the best welcoming party anyone could ask for,” the Cammack remarks. Most notably, Franklin (named after Franklin Street, a nod to his owner’s University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill roots), the golden retriever, loves to nudge his way into meetings, and makes himself at home by sitting on top of the guests and firmly placing his paws on top of them for attention. If he is not successful in getting the attention he demands, he will continue to nudge and paw at the person –and even bark at them if that becomes necessary –until the



visitor relents, usually with lots of laughter.

Madison, a German Shepherd mix, is equally adorable and loving. She got her name from James Madison “Father of the Constitution” and fourth U.S. President. Both dogs, according to their owners, are the light of their lives, and offer love that they are happy to share with anyone who visits their DC office. “[Franklin] is 100% the center of our universe. [He] is the best addition we could ask for,” his owner exclaims.

“Dogs are the very best, truly a part of the family,” the Congresswoman exclaims. “They are supportive, protective, and truly man’s best friend.”

Not only are dogs ‘man’s best friend,’ but they can play a vital role in our nation’s health and safety. Rep. Cammack recognizes this and has cosponsored *Working Dog Commemorative Coin Act (H.R.807)*. The bill raises awareness of working dogs; and if passed would authorize the Department of Treasury to mint a commemorative coin series emblematic of the contributions of working dogs to society, including in detection, military service, therapy, and assistance.

The American Kennel Club values the contribution that working and detection dogs make to national security and the extraordinary role that these dogs play in protecting the peace and security of individuals, communities and nations against extremist threats.

In recent years, assuring a reliable source for working dogs, especially explosive detection dogs, has been increasingly challenging. Canines are the most efficient and effective tool available for identifying and detecting hidden explosives. However, more than 80 percent of canines in government services are acquired overseas, leaving the U.S. reliant on overseas sourcing for one of our most important safety and security tools. To combat this problem, the AKC developed the [AKC Detection Dog Task Force](#) which brings together experts from academia, government/public policy, military, policing, training, and breeding to help address the shortage of U.S.-bred, raised and trained detection dogs, and to improve breeding, raising and efficiency in preparing high-quality U.S. dogs for important future work as detection canines.

Whether you own a German Shorthair Pointer who sniffs out explosives at the airport, or a Golden Retriever that demands affection during staff meetings, according to the Congresswoman, “dogs are consistent companions who love you no matter what.” ■

Did You Know?

- Golden Retrievers are serious workers at hunting and field work, as guides for the blind, and in search-and-rescue, enjoy obedience and other competitive events, and have an endearing love of life when not at work.
- Golden Retrievers are among the most popular breeds in America and are familiar faces from numerous sports media spots, including the movie “Air Bud” and the TV show “Full House.”
- There are many reasons why German Shepherds stand in the front rank of canine royalty, but experts say their defining attribute is character: loyalty, courage, confidence, the ability to learn commands for many tasks, and the willingness to put their life on the line in defense of loved ones.



The Value of Responsible Dog Breeders

There are two issues on which all dog lovers agree. First, dogs deserve a life in a safe, caring, and healthy environment. Second, those who treat dogs in a negligent or cruel manner should be held accountable.

The American Kennel Club (AKC) takes a strong line on animal cruelty, including implementing a policy that suspends AKC privileges for anyone convicted of animal cruelty involving dogs. The AKC is also the only registry that has a significant Investigations and Inspections program to ensure that people who register litters with the AKC raise their dogs in a humane manner.

The AKC works to ensure that the rights of responsible owners and breeders are protected and that anyone—regardless of the number of dogs they own—who treats a dog negligently or cruelly is held responsible for such actions.

What is a Responsible Breeder?

One of the most effective ways to ensure that dogs are placed in safe, loving environments is to support responsible dog breeders. Local communities should consider responsible breeders an asset, as they are in a unique position to mentor new dog owners and provide advice and detailed information about the dogs they own and sell.

Responsible breeders are experts in their breed and know the pedigree of the dogs they sell. They can tell potential buyers about the temperament, health, and other characteristics unique to the puppy they are considering. Many breeders devote their entire lives to developing a line or pedigree of dogs that meet specific temperament, performance, and health standards. Many also breed dogs for specific purposes, such as hunting, search and rescue, therapy, and assistance for the disabled.

When responsible breeders sell a puppy, they ensure these dogs are placed in good homes by implementing a screening process for potential buyers and following up after the purchase. Breeders often take dogs back if they are not in an ideal situation and place them in new homes, as in the case of “Bo”, the Obama family’s Portuguese Water Dog.

Most of the AKC national breed parent clubs have rescue programs for their breeds. Parent club rescues are often comprised of AKC breeder volunteers who work with local animal control officers or individual owners to ensure dogs are not abandoned in shelters, but rather placed in safe, loving environments.

Being a responsible dog breeder is truly a labor of love that comes with a significant price tag. Responsible dog breeders breed because they love their chosen breed(s) and are willing to dedicate their lives and resources to raising quality dogs.

More than a Numbers Game

Every profession from accountants and lawyers to doctors and teachers has a few “bad apples” that tarnish the reputation of an otherwise respectable profession. Unfortunately, dog breeding is no exception.

Thankfully, these few irresponsible breeders comprise a very small minority of an otherwise unique and special profession. Those who do breed or care for dogs in an irresponsible or cruel manner must be punished under the law, but the term “irresponsible” must be carefully defined.

An unfortunate but common trend is to equate the term “irresponsible” with the number of dogs – particularly females – someone owns. This assumption often occurs among individuals with little knowledge or expertise in animal husbandry, genetics or best practices in animal care. In fact, keeping multiple dogs and maintaining proper care and conditions demonstrates a commitment to proper care and genetic diversity. The number of animals owned has never correlated with the level of care.

Many agriculture groups have partnered with the AKC throughout the United States to fight legislation that places an arbitrary cap on animal ownership. They know that historically as well as today, the great kennels—like the great horse farms or cattle ranches—have maintained and provided excellent care to large numbers of animals. Just as there are excellent owners of 100 dogs, there are negligent owners of one dog.

Simply reducing the number of animals a person or business may own will not automatically make them a better or more humane owner. There is no magic number that will suddenly make someone a better dog owner or breeder. Arbitrary numerical caps completely miss the underlying issue—owner responsibility.

Animal ownership limits can actually create more problems for dogs and the community at large. Such laws are extremely difficult for communities to enforce. Limits can force caring, responsible owners to relinquish dogs to a local shelter simply to comply with an arbitrary ownership cap. These dogs are then housed or euthanized at great expense to local taxpayers.

Additionally, limits on the number of dogs a responsible breeder may own has the potential to cause long-term damage to a breed. Ownership limits restrict breed populations and also the access that responsible breeders need to ensure the genetic diversity necessary for the future health and well-being of the breed.

A Matter of Enforcement

There is no question that those who treat dogs in an inhumane manner should be punished. Each of the 50 states, as well as the United States Code, outlaw animal negligence and cruelty. When tragic stories of animal cruelty and irresponsible breeding come to light, they almost always result in charges under existing law being brought against the individual or business responsible.

The problem is not an absence of laws, but rather a lack of enforcement or the resources to properly enforce existing laws. Many states and local communities simply do not have the manpower or money necessary to adequately enforce existing laws.

There have been many attempts across the country to further regulate dog breeders. These include requiring warrantless inspections of private homes without probable cause, as well as impractical and arbitrary standards of care that may not be in the best interest of dogs. Not only do such provisions violate the rights of responsible, law-abiding citizens, they are also ineffective and unenforceable – and in some cases may even harm dogs. The problem is more complex than simply creating new laws – it requires the ability and will to enforce the laws against negligence and cruelty that are already on the books. A “quick fix” of adding new laws will not change or improve a lack of enforcement and may only divert resources from much-needed enforcement operations.

At the federal level, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has regularly strengthened the standards for humane care and treatment of dogs and other animals owned by those regulated by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The AKC supports the strong enforcement of the AWA, as well as an increase in the personnel and capacity of USDA to enforce the AWA.

An Effective Solution

Breeder and owner responsibility cannot be defined by establishing arbitrary ownership limits or unenforceable breeding requirements. Instead, responsibility should be defined by the quality of care given to the animals. This is why the American Kennel Club works with dog owners, breeders, and community leaders throughout the country to educate the public about responsible dog ownership.

The AKC also encourages responsible breeding practices by supporting educational symposia for breeders and competitive dog shows and other events where top breeders showcase and compete with the best of their breeding programs. The AKC Canine Health Foundation has allocated millions of dollars to research studies focusing on helping dogs live longer, healthier lives.

Where legislative fixes are needed, the AKC is pleased to assist in bringing community leaders and responsible breeders together to create positive, effective solutions. For example, Ohio lawmakers sought over several legislative sessions to close loopholes and clarify breeding and care standards for dogs. The AKC worked with responsible dog owners, breeders, and key legislators and enforcement authorities to identify the real issues. Together, this group finally succeeded in creating a strong, clear law that provided reasonable guidelines and enforcement provisions.

For over 135 years, the AKC has been dedicated to well-being of dogs. We support and value the responsible owners and breeders who breed and raise our cherished pets and beloved working dogs. Responsible breeders are an important asset and educational resource in our communities. Through educational programs and enforcement of existing laws, we can punish those who harm animals while recognizing that responsible breeders who devote their lives to their dogs are part of the solution, not the problem.





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Understanding the Facts of Dog Breeding Laws

The American Kennel Club (AKC) supports strong enforcement of the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), including new rules currently part of a 3-year implementation process set for completion in fall 2024.

Animal rights/protection groups are seeking to place new laws impacting hobby breeders in the 2023 Farm Bill; AKC believes existing rules governing breeders should be fully implemented and assessed before adding new, confusing and overly-restrictive laws.

Responsible dog breeders are experts on breeding and often have decades of practical and scientific experience. Stakeholders with experience in animal husbandry, including representatives from some of the 5000 AKC clubs around the country, should be consulted during the legislative process. By contrast, animal protection organizations that seek to limit pet breeding typically have little scientific knowledge or practical knowledge or experience with animal husbandry.

AKC believes appropriate care that considers the purpose, characteristics and needs of the animal should always be the priority.

Laws governing dog ownership and breeding should be reasonable, enforceable and non-discriminatory. This is why AKC opposes HR 1462 as introduced and urges Congress to not advance these bills or allow them to be added to the Farm Bill.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US!

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\$4M Increase



AKC SUPPORTS INCREASED AWA FUNDING

From FY 2019 – FY 2023 the USDA's budget for enforcing the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) remained static, despite increasing program demands. AKC supported an increase of \$4M for AWA enforcement in FY 2023 and continues to support additional resources to ensure that the AWA is properly enforced.



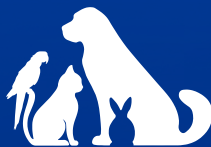
STATES ALREADY HAVE FELONY CRUELTY LAWS

All 50 U.S. states already have felony cruelty laws. Thankfully, cases of animal cruelty to dogs are rare, which is why they sometimes make the news. In cases where such activities do occur, current laws should be fully enforced.



1.2 M DOGS IMPORTED INTO THE US EVERY YEAR

The annual replacement rate for pet dogs in the U.S. is 8 million/year. U.S. breeders cannot meet this demand for pet dogs. According to the CDC, approximately 1.2 million pet dogs were imported into the U.S. in 2019, primarily for the rescue retail and retail markets.* Overly restrictive regulations undermine the flexibility needed for quality regulated pet breeding programs and incentivizes production of pets in overseas markets, where welfare laws do not exist.



MANY HOBBY BREEDERS ARE ALREADY SUBJECT TO COMMERCIAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Dog owners and hobby breeders who have any combination of 5 intact female mammals (rabbits, cats, hamsters, gerbils, dogs, etc.) and transfer one offspring sight unseen are subject to federal licensing and regulation as a commercial breeder. A person could own only one dog and have one litter and still be subject to federal USDA licensing and kenneling requirements for commercial dog breeder/dealers.



DOGS ARE THE MOST DIVERSE SPECIES OF MAMMAL

From the tiny Chihuahua to the massive Saint Bernard, dogs are the most diverse species of land mammal. Their requirements for temperatures, housing, exercise, food, etc. vary. The one-size-fits-all rules in the "Puppy Protection Act" (HR 1642) would undermine small, high quality specialized breeding programs.



WHAT QUALIFIES AS 'PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM'?

Goldie's Law (HR 1788) requires USDA inspectors to destroy or remove a dog from its home if they believe it is experiencing "psychological harm"; but the proposal doesn't define what this means. It also de-prioritizes the care and wellbeing of dogs by removing the distinction between care and paperwork violations.

* Demographic replacement rate; 2019, the last year for which data is available



French Bulldog Knocks Labrador Retriever Out of Number One Spot, Ending 31-Year Stay at the Top



There's a new top dog in town! The American Kennel Club (AKC), a not-for-profit organization, the world's largest purebred dog registry and leading advocate for dogs, announced this morning that the ever-popular Labrador Retriever's record-breaking reign has ended. The playful and adaptable **French Bulldog** is America's most popular breed for the first time.

While it may come as a surprise to some that the loveable Lab's 31-year stay at the top has come to an end, the French Bulldog has been quietly climbing the charts for many years. Over the past decade, the Frenchie has gone from 14th in 2012 to number 1 in 2022, and registrations have increased over 1,000% in that time period.

"The French Bulldog has seen a surge in popularity over the years, and for good reason," said AKC Executive Secretary Gina DiNardo. "Frenchie's are playful, adaptable, loyal and outgoing. They make wonderful companions for a variety of people, but

it's extremely important to do your research to not only find the right breed for your lifestyle, but to ensure that you're getting a well-bred dog from a responsible breeder."

Other breeds making moves in 2022 include the American Hairless Terrier, which jumped an impressive 15 spots year over year (#135 in 2021 to #120 in 2022), the Gordon Setter (#113 in 2021 and #99 in 2022), the Italian Greyhound (#73 in 2021 and #63 in 2022) and the Anatolian Shepherd Dog (#88 in 2021 and #79 in 2022). Making strides over the past decade are the Cane Corso (#60 in 2012 and #18 in 2022), the Belgian Malinois (#71 in 2012 and #32 in 2022), the Giant Schnauzer (#96 in 2012 and #58 in 2022) and the English Cocker Spaniel (#64 in 2012 and #40 in 2022).

Enjoy dogs on Instagram? Here's where some of social media's favorites fall on the list: Pembroke Welsh Corgi (#11), Yorkshire Terrier (#13), Siberian Husky (#21) and Pug (#35).

See below for AKC's top 10 most popular breeds in 2022, along with the 2021 comparison:

2022 Most Popular Dogs in the U.S.

1. French Bulldog
2. Labrador Retriever
3. Golden Retriever
4. German Shepherd Dog
5. Poodle
6. Bulldog
7. Rottweiler
8. Beagle
9. Dachshund
10. German Shorthaired Pointer

2021 Most Popular Dogs in the U.S.

1. Labrador Retriever
2. French Bulldog
3. Golden Retriever
4. German Shepherd Dog
5. Poodle
6. Bulldog
7. Beagle
8. Rottweiler
9. German Shorthaired Pointer
10. Dachshund

Washington D.C.'s Top 5 Breeds for 2022:

1. French Bulldog
2. Golden Retriever
3. Labrador Retriever
4. Poodle
5. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

100th AKC Reunite Pet Disaster Relief Trailer Donated To Honesdale, PA



AKC Reunite, the largest non-profit pet identification and recovery service provider in the United States is pleased to announce the donation of its 100th AKC Pet Disaster Relief trailer in Honesdale, PA. This life-saving equipment will be available to dispatch to any local disaster scene that needs assistance sheltering pets. It will assist the Wayne & Pike County Animal Response Team in helping community pets that may become displaced in an emergency. The donation of this trailer is dedicated to Patricia Laurans, a co-chair of the AKC Reunite Pet Disaster Relief Trailer Program.

AKC Pet Disaster Relief is a nationwide program sponsored by AKC Reunite, the country's largest non-profit microchip identification and recovery service. AKC Reunite partners with AKC Dog Clubs and pet lovers across the country to make these donations a reality. The Wayne & Pike County Animal Response Team trailer was made possible by a donation from the Kennel Club of Philadelphia, Harrisburg Kennel Club, and the Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of America.

"AKC Reunite feels honored to have been able to make an impact in 100 communities around the country by providing pet disaster relief materials to help them be prepared when disaster strikes," said Tom Sharp, President of AKC Reunite. "This trailer is dedicated to Patricia Laurans, co-chair of the program task force and the best champion and cheerleader one could ask for. With Pat's leadership, and the help of hundreds of AKC dog clubs around the country, we have been able to deliver lifesaving equipment since 2013."

Patricia W. Laurans, of Newtown, Connecticut, was active in the sport of dogs for 50 years as an exhibitor, all-breed dog handler and breeder of Best In Show, National Specialty winning and top producing German Wirehaired Pointers. She served as a Delegate for the German Wirehaired Pointer Club of America for over 30 years. During that time she was elected to the AKC Board of Directors and started an AKC Breeders Education program and helped establish the Junior Scholarship program.



When Laurans left the Board of Directors in 2000, she was elected to the Parent Club Committee and served as its Chairperson from 2000 until 2022. During this tenure, she helped establish the Parent Club Conference Program and chaired three National Parent Club Conferences. In 2013, she helped establish the AKC Reunite Pet Disaster Relief Trailer Program.

The equipment in the AKC Pet Disaster Relief trailers helps to create a safe, temporary home-base for at least 65 pets during the first 72 hours after a disaster is declared. The trailers house and deliver essential animal care items including crates and carriers, AKC Reunite microchips and an AKC Reunite universal microchip scanner, bowls, collars, and leashes as well as fans, lighting and a generator, cleaning supplies and maintenance items. These supplies can be used as co-location shelters, where people can evacuate with their pets, as well as emergency animal shelters for displaced animals.

"We were so excited to hear that we were awarded the grant for a new trailer for the Wayne & Pike County Animal Response Team in Pennsylvania. When the trailer arrived, we were even more excited to see that it was fully loaded with equipment," said Fran Gavin, President of the Wayne & Pike County Animal Response Team. "Having this trailer is a blessing as it will increase our response time when we are dispatched to an emergency. On behalf of the Wayne and Pike CART and Wayne & Pike counties I would like to extend our most sincere thanks to AKC Reunite for this amazing donation."

"The Kennel Club of Philadelphia is proud to sponsor the 100th Reunite Disaster Trailer for Wayne & Pike Counties," said Wayne Ferguson, President of the Kennel Club of Philadelphia. "To date, our club has sponsored 13 Disaster Trailers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey to help ensure that in the event of a disaster, our pets will be safe."

Learn more about how to get involved in AKC Pet Disaster Relief at www.akcreunite.org/relief. ■



AKC Canine Health Foundation Funds Groundbreaking Study to Evaluate Potential Treatment for Degenerative Myelopathy



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB
**CANINE HEALTH
FOUNDATION**[®]
PREVENT TREAT & CURE[®]

AKC Canine Health Foundation Funds Groundbreaking Study to Evaluate Potential Treatment for Degenerative Myelopathy

The AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF), a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the health of all dogs, announces funding for a groundbreaking study evaluating a potential treatment for canine degenerative myelopathy.

Degenerative myelopathy (DM) is a progressive neurologic disease in dogs with characteristics similar to some forms of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease) in humans. There is currently no treatment available to slow disease progression in dogs. With CHF funding, investigators at four veterinary teaching hospitals are collaborating to set-up clinical trials and establish treatment protocols for dogs with DM using riluzole, the first drug approved by the FDA to treat ALS in humans in 1995.

"This grant will allow for a platform trial design to recruit DM cases and get clinical trials underway," says Dr. Joan Coates, the study's Principal Investigator and veterinary neurologist at the University of Missouri. "Information about biomarker testing and control groups will be shared among the neurology researchers of the current participating institutions (University of Missouri, The Ohio State University [Dr. Sarah Moore], Tufts University [Dr. Dominik Faessler], North Carolina State

University [Dr. Natasha Olby]), facilitating consistent data collection and providing easier access for dog owners wanting to participate in clinical trials."

The potential for a new treatment to slow clinical progression of DM in dogs is garnering support from many dog owners and other nonprofit organizations interested in the disease. The CHF-funded study is sponsored by [Bubba's Buddies](#), a nonprofit organization started by dog owners frustrated with the lack of treatment options for their dog. The charity raises funds for DM research and provides support for other families affected by the disease. The Finding a Cure for DM Foundation, Inc. is another nonprofit organization that decided to use its remaining assets to support CHF-funded DM research.

"A treatment for degenerative myelopathy would have a profound impact on the quality of life of affected dogs and their families," says Dr. J. Charles Garvin, Chair of the CHF Board of Directors. "CHF is proud to partner with our dedicated investigators and passionate donors to make progress toward that goal."

The DM treatment study is part of CHF's \$13.4 million active research portfolio funding studies into all aspects of canine physical and behavioral health. Full details on the study, including information on participation, can be found at www.akcchf.org/03139. ■

basics of existing requirements of the AWA and how it protects animals in the exhibition, pet breeding, handling, and research.

A discussion of current AWA requirements related to dog and pet breeding included:

- Requirements for licensing and pre-licensing inspections.
- Annual inspections of all facilities, records, and any premises where dogs may be kept.
- Recording keeping, including full health records for each dog, identification, intake, and disposition of each animal.
- Health care standards, which require all licensees to have an attending veterinarian, an approved plan of veterinary care, regular vet examinations throughout the year, including an annual head-to-tail health examination with specific attention provided for eyes, skin, nails, hair, and teeth. All health care records must be maintained and made available for inspection, including tracking of incidents, treatments, progress of care, individual and kennel health trends and frequency of illness and injuries.
- A plan and maintenance records for a daily exercise plan for each animal, including positive physical contact with humans, approved by the attending veterinarian.
- A plan and maintenance of proper husbandry standards, covering numerous items including compatible grouping, exercise, feeding, water, food storage, receptacles, sanitization, and housekeeping. An emergency contingency plan is also required.
- Facility operating standards, including building construction and kennel engineering standards, size and appropriate space for primary enclosures, regular cleaning and sanitation, temperature, ventilation, humidity, temperature; availability of running water, lighting, and electricity; drainage and waste disposal; availability of sinks and washrooms; spot cleaning and sanitation of surfaces; quarantine areas, housekeeping, and pest control.

Despite legislative efforts to amend the AWA, especially as part of the Farm Bill, AWA regulations are far from static. More than five new rules impacting licensees have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented in the last decade. For example, the amendments for [Licensing and Requirements for Dogs](#), which provide significant changes to the regulation of breeding programs, is currently in the middle of a 3-year implementation process, and isn't scheduled for completion until October 2024.

AKC supports strong enforcement of the AWA and the flexibility it currently provides to licensees that allow for a variety of thoughtful approaches by experts to optimize care and outcomes. AKC believes that proper care for animals must always be the priority.

One-size-fits all mandates such as the Puppy Protection Act (HR 1624) and Goldie's Act (HR 1788) may sound great on the surface, but they are problematic because they increase emphasis on paperwork compliance rather than positive, performance based outcomes. Consider this: dogs are the most diverse species of mammals. What is appropriate for one breed may not be appropriate for another, and rigid requirements in these bills could undermine appropriate care. Flexibility for dog breeders is also important because not all regulated breeders are large professional kennels; they also include some small hobby and specialty breeders who may maintain only a few animals that they raise in their homes.

To learn more about the Animal Welfare Act and related regulations, visit the [Animal Care program at USDA](#), or visit [AKC's regulatory resources pages](#), available via the AKC Legislative Action Center, www.akcgr.org.

All the best,



Sheila Goffe
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