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# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New in Government Relations

Welcome to the last quarter of 2023! Now is a great time to prepare for next year's legislative session, whether that is introducing yourself to your local lawmakers, touching base with your regional AKC Government Relations analyst to set up a presentation for your club, or familiarizing yourself with the great things AKC and its dog clubs are working on to share these successes with your lawmakers.

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## AKC Attends Pet Night on the Hill - A Celebration of the Human/Animal Bond

Recently, the American Kennel Club sponsored Pet Night on Capitol Hill. The annual celebration of pets brings together Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and leaders in the pet care community to share programs, policies, and key data making a clear case that pets positively impact our mental, physical, and social health.

The event is co-hosted by the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI), the Pet Food Institute (PFI) and the Pet Advocacy Network. AKC Government Relations staff and representatives attended the event.

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## Belle-City Kennel Club Shares Tips for Meeting with Local Lawmakers

The majority of state legislatures are out of session, which means most lawmakers are home in their districts - and available to meet with constituents. Recently, members of the Belle-City Kennel Club in Illinois took advantage of this to introduce their club to their state representative.

"We consider ourselves the best-kept secret in Illinois," said Michele Kasten, Belle-City Kennel Club board member and Vice President of the Illinois Federation of Dog Clubs and Owners. "For years, we were content to focus on breeding, training, and serving the community... But now that there have been unfair accusations against breeders and hobbyists, and legislation [impacting our way of life], we knew we needed to make ourselves known and share more about our expertise."

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## AKC Patriotic Puppy Program Participants Deliver Big at K2 Hands-On Seminar

Breeding and training dogs for detection dog programs can be an intimidating feat. Add the stress of having someone else evaluate those same dogs...well, it can be downright overwhelming! Recently, a group of Patriotic Puppy Program participants attended a hands-on seminar at [K2 Solutions](#) in Jackson Springs, NC to learn how K2 evaluates dogs, as well as to work one-on-one with K2's training staff.

The original goal for the first of AKC's in-person training seminars was to add new "tools" to the training toolboxes of PPP trainers and breeders. K2 added another goal: Evaluate PPP participant canines currently in training to develop long-term relationships with these participants as vendors who could provide quality dogs for K2's training programs.

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## New Video Highlights Programs to 'Educate and Empower' Detection Dog Breeders

The AKC [Detection Dog Task Force](#) (DDTF) is pleased to introduce a [new video](#) that shares AKC's continued efforts in addressing the shortage of domestically bred, -raised and -trained explosives detection dogs in the United States.

The video highlights interviews from terrorism experts, law enforcement officials, academia, and current [AKC DDTF Patriotic Puppy Program](#) (PPP) participants. It features training footage of puppies as young as 8 weeks old to year-old green detection dogs that have since gone on to careers as working detection dogs. "The Patriotic Puppy Program allows us to give something back to the country that we love, being able to give back is important to us", state current PPP participants Teal and Jim Knapp of California.

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## AKC DDTF Webinar Series - Scalability: How to Find Efficiencies in Your Training Day

You are invited to join the AKC Detection Dog Task Force for our next webinar on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 7:30 PM (ET).

Tips from the Pros ... Many new trainers struggle to become more efficient in their training day as they begin to scale up the number of dogs they are training. Join AKC detection dog experts as we discuss a number of issues trainers face daily when training 20+ dogs for working dog training programs and ways to overcome these issues while maintaining quality standards and a budget.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

Linked below are some highlights of pending legislation impacting dog ownership and dog owners' rights across the country. For more information on these issues, and information on how you can get involved, visit the AKC GR Legislative Action Center at [www.akcgr.org](http://www.akcgr.org).

Visit the [2023 Legislation Tracking map](#) for the most up-to-date information on state and federal legislation. This site, updated each weekday, provides the latest bill text, status, and links to legislative alerts posted by the AKC.

In addition to tracking and responding to legislative proposals, AKC Government Relations addresses dog-related regulatory proposals from the U.S. federal government, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia. AKC GR's Regulatory Resource Center provides updates on [federal](#) and [state](#) regulatory issues that may impact dog owners.

Federal	State	Local	Regulatory
Issues that may affect all dog owners in the U.S.	Issues specific to your state	Issues at the city, county, and metropolitan levels, and in U.S. territories	Regulatory issues at the federal, state, and local levels

Please contact AKC GR at (919) 816-3720 or [doglaw@akc.org](mailto:doglaw@akc.org) for more information or to let us know what's happening in your local community.



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