



PRESS RELEASE

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Two Decades of Restrictions on Dog Ownership in Miami-Dade Yield No Positive Results *Significant Cost to Taxpayers and Infringement on Citizens' Property Rights*

Amenia, NY – While Miami-Dade is the only county in the State of Florida that restricts citizens' property rights to own "pit bull" dogs, the county has failed to enhance public safety and taxpayers continue to incur significant financial costs to enforce the outdated law.

"In 1989 when the legislation was passed, Miami-Dade County claimed that taking away peoples' right to own 'pit bull' dogs would lower the number of serious accidents involving dogs," said Donald Cleary, Director of Communications and Publications for the National Canine Research Council. "But over the two decades that followed there was no appreciable decrease in dog bites and no increase in public safety. The only thing that declined was citizens' rights to own property (i.e., 'pit bull' dogs). And taxpayers are still forced to pay for enforcing this archaic and discriminatory law."

- **Failure to Enhance Public Safety:** While the number of dog bites throughout Florida and the United States has plummeted to historic lows, Miami-Dade's decrease has been slower than the state-wide and national trends – and most of their decline occurred *prior* to 1989, when the legislation was enacted. In 1998 (10 years after the ban was enacted) the county was home to 14% of Florida's total population, but it had 18% of dog bite hospitalizations; more recently in 2007, Miami-Dade included 13% of Florida's population, but had 16% of the state's dog bite victim hospitalizations.
- **Significant Financial Cost to Taxpayers:** According to a Fiscal Impact Calculator developed by Guerilla Economics and Best Friends Animal Society, taxpayers spend as much as \$3 million annually to enforce Miami-Dade County's restrictions on "pit bull" dog ownership.
- **Unfair Infringement on Property Rights:** Miami-Dade County is the only county in Florida that restricts a citizen's right to own a "pit bull" dog. On the national level, the vast majority of cities, counties, and states uphold citizens' property rights to own "pit bull" dogs.

For more information, please visit the National Canine Research Council online at www.nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com.