



**AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB®**

## **RESPONSIBLE BREEDING PRACTICES**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Dog owners bear a special responsibility to their canine companions to provide proper care and humane treatment at all times. The American Kennel Club (AKC) and its member clubs understand the challenges in creating effective animal control ordinances for a community. That is why we support laws that target irresponsible dog owners and substandard animal care. These are the issues that need to be addressed in any law seeking to regulate substandard kennels. Regulations such as limit laws and stringent engineering requirements, however, are ineffective, difficult to enforce, and unfair to responsible dog owners. Government officials should instead focus on reasonable, enforceable legislation to crack down on irresponsible owners without punishing responsible breeders.

### **POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- **AKC SUPPORTS ANIMAL CRUELTY LAWS AND STANDARDS OF CARE**  
The heartbreaking stories and pictures of mistreated dogs are not the result of an individual owning too many dogs. They are the result of irresponsible owners who are unable and/or unwilling to properly care for their animals. The AKC strongly opposes the breeding of dogs by those who do so without regard for the dogs' welfare. We support scrupulous enforcement of the federal Animal Welfare Act and state and local regulations governing the humane care of animals.
- **LIMITING DOG OWNERSHIP WILL NOT PROTECT DOGS**  
Irresponsible owners exist regardless of how many dogs they own. There are responsible owners of many dogs and irresponsible owners of one dog. Selecting an arbitrary limit will not prevent these people from being bad owners. A limit on the number of dogs an individual can own would restrict the many responsible breeders who raise and breed purebred dogs. These breeders make a serious commitment to their animals and to ensuring the future health, welfare and breed type of their individual breeds. They work to carefully screen potential owners to make sure the dogs will be placed in a safe, caring environment. In addition, many proposed laws that target "puppy mills" impact the many responsible fanciers and dog owners who also rescue unwanted animals and either personally adopt them as pets or find them permanent homes.
- **LAWS SHOULD IMPLEMENT REASONABLE, ENFORCEABLE STANDARDS**  
Any bill that seeks to improve the quality of life and care of dogs must focus on responsible ownership and strict enforcement of neglect and cruelty laws. Laws should be passed and enforced that establish reasonable standards of care. These laws should not, however, impose rigorous engineering and other requirements on breeders that are difficult to follow and enforce.
- **LAWS SHOULD NOT CREATE MORE BURDENS ON A COMMUNITY**  
Limit laws are very costly and burdensome to enforce. If someone owns more than their allotted number of dogs, they will then be required to dispose of those over the limit. These dogs will end up housed in shelters and/or euthanized at the community/taxpayer's expense. In addition, implementing a bill with stringent engineering and other standards is difficult to enforce and results in an enormous strain on animal control officials.