

CLOSE [X]

Press Releases

7/17/2013 **Bill barring municipal ban on specific animal breeds signed into law**

STATE HOUSE – Gov. Lincoln Chafee has signed into law a bill passed by the General Assembly that now prevents cities and towns from banning specific breeds of dogs or cats.

“Years ago it was German Shepherds that were ‘bad’ dogs. Then it was Dobermans, then Rottweilers and today it is Pit Bulls,” said Rep. Thomas A. Palangio (D-Dist. 3, Providence), sponsor of the House legislation ([2013-H 5671](#)). “No specific breed of dog is intrinsically bad or vicious or dangerous. It is the owners or handlers than can make a certain dog vicious, but entire breeds of dogs should not be outlawed based on the way some of them are trained.”

Sen. Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, North Providence), sponsor of the Senate bill ([2013-S 1011A](#)), agreed. “I understand that certain kinds of dogs have come to have a certain reputation – Pit Bulls, for instance, because of things like the Michael Vick affair. But it is the people, the owners that train dogs to be vicious that is the problem, not the breed of dog. Pit Bulls, in fact, can be some of the most loyal and gentle dogs you can have.”

The two legislators said they also wanted to ensure dog owners who have contacted them with concerns about the bill that it has no impact on spaying or neutering, or requirements in that regard. “The bill simply provides that certain breeds of dogs cannot be banned in communities, based on what is an erroneous impression about a certain breed,” said Representative Palangio.

“People do get attacked by dogs, which is very unfortunate and I, like every other citizens, would like to see that never happen,” said Senator Ciccone. “But it is unfair to blame the animal. Municipalities should, instead, target the people who mistreat their pets, or purposely make them vicious.”

The law, which takes immediate effect, was co-sponsored in the House by Rep. Anastasia P. Williams (D-Dist. 9, Providence), Rep. Peter G. Palumbo (D-Dist. 16, Cranston), Rep. Charlene M. Lima (D-Dist. 14, Cranston, Providence) and Rep. John J. DeSimone (D-Dist. 5, Providence). Senate Majority Leader Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, Providence, North Providence) co-sponsored the Senate bill.

For more information, contact:
Legislative Press Bureau,

State House Room 20
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 222-2457