

HCS HBs 2241 & 2244-- BREED SPECIFIC REGULATION

SPONSOR: Gregory

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 16 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2241.

The bill specifies that the General Assembly occupies and preempts the entire field of legislation touching in any way the control or regulation of specific breeds of dogs. However, a village, town, city, or county can still prohibit dogs from running at large or to further control or regulate dogs within its boundaries so long as the ordinance, order, policy, or regulation is not breed specific.

This bill is same as HB 2244 (2020) and similar to HB 297 (2019).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that these local ordinances essentially prohibit consumers from being able to own the breed of their choice. It is time to make Missouri the next state to outlaw these ordinances. Comprehensive dangerous dog ordinances cover all vicious dogs regardless of breed, and breed specific legislation has been proven to be ineffective on many levels. They provide no improvements to public safety, and they criminalize non-criminal behavior. They are also very subjective and costly to enforce. These ordinances have more to do with regulating people than dogs themselves. Most dog owners consider their pets family and this is a burden on residents who have to fight just to keep their pets. Mayors and city managers want the state to act on this so they will not have to.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Gregory; Shane Rudman; Nicklas Lobby; Humane Society of the United States; Cindy Marshall; Michelle Davis; Brent Toellner, Best Friends Animal Society; American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ; Erin Garrison; Missouri Veterinary Medical Association; Missouri Animal Husbandry Association, Missouri Federation of Animal Owners; Missouri Pet Breeders Association; Missouri Federation of Animal Owners; and Erin Morse, Midwest Animal ResQ.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.