

## New England State Issues January 2022

By [AKC Government Relations](#)

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**Connecticut** – On January 13, 2022, lawmaker members of the Connecticut Animal Advocacy Caucus met with advocates to identify legislative priorities for the session. The agenda includes legislation that would prohibit the use of exotic or wild animals in traveling animal acts.

**Massachusetts** – Despite AKC GR testimony in opposition to [SB 1322](#), the bill has been released favorably again this session from the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government and sent to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Among other restrictions, the bill would allow an animal control officer employed by a city or town to tell residents how many dogs or cats they can own after an inspection of their premises upon kennel license application. AKC GR submitted a detailed letter to this committee outlining concerns with the text on December 21, 2021. This legislation has been re-filed multiple sessions in a row following the same path of “no further action”. AKC GR will continue to monitor it.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 2397](#) would prohibit the misrepresentation of a service animal. AKC GR submitted testimony in support to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs for the public hearing that was held on January 7, 2022.

**Massachusetts** – [HB 2547](#) would authorize the emergency transport and treatment of police K-9s injured in the line of duty. AKC GR urged Massachusetts residents to contact their lawmakers in support and request that they co-sponsor the bill. As a result, a significant number of new legislators signed on as co-sponsors. A companion bill, [SB 1606](#), was refiled in the Senate. AKC GR issued an [alert](#) and testified in support before the Joint Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee on July 14, 2021. On November 9, 2021, the Senate Ways and Means Committee responded positively by making a few changes to the text and releasing it favorably as [SB 2573](#). New text in the bill provides flexibility when utilizing the provision if ambulances are in limited supply or an emergency veterinary clinic is not nearby. SB 2573 passed the Senate on a unanimous vote taken November 10.

**Massachusetts** – Multiple re-filed bills with problematic provisions for dog owners were considered by the Joint Municipalities and Regional Government Committee on September 28, 2021. AKC GR issued [an](#)

[alert](#) summarizing the bills and strongly encouraging residents to email the committee in addition to AKC's written testimony. AKC GR provided support for just one bill on the agenda, [HB 2146](#), because it would create the same consumer protections irrespective of where a pet was acquired.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 230](#) and [HB 384](#) seek to ban the retail sale of cats and dogs in pet shops unless they are sourced from animal shelters or rescue organizations. Similar to past versions, the proposed animal shelter and rescue definitions are problematic because they exclude rescue activities by breeders. The bills initially were assigned to the Joint Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee for review, which last session redrafted them to create consumer protections irrespective of the source of the pet. The bills have been reassigned to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. AKC GR anticipates public hearings soon.

**Massachusetts** – [HB 305](#) would establish state licensure for commercial boarding and training kennels and provide numerous regulations regarding care, group sizes, and housing, just to name a few. In addition, the state would approve required training programs regarding animal behavior, dog body language, and other subjects. Injuries to dogs or people would be reported to the state. Other types of kennels (including personal kennels) could be required in the future to obtain state licensure in addition to a municipal kennel license. AKC GR issued [an alert](#) and testified at the public hearing in July. Following the hearing, AKC GR had the opportunity to submit recommended changes for the bill.

**Massachusetts** – [HB 378](#) would require anyone who grooms a pet for money to pass approved testing standards and obtain a state grooming license. Grooming facilities would also undergo periodic inspections to ensure compliance with rules and regulations issued. Use of a cage or box dryer would be prohibited. Violations would result in penalties ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 per offense. AKC GR testified at the public hearing on July 12, 2021, regarding concerns detailed in AKC GR's [alert](#). Following the hearing, AKC GR met virtually with the bill sponsor's office and outlined suggested amendments to the legislation, which are being considered.

**Maine** – Two measures of interest to AKC in 2022 include [LD 1828](#), "An Act to Improve the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Low-cost Spaying and Neutering Program" which would require the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to contract for the administration of the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund, and [LD 1744](#), to increase funding for the Animal Welfare Fund by increasing certain

animal feed fees. Both bills are scheduled for public hearing on January 20, 2022 and AKC GR will monitor their movement.

**Maine** – [LD 1885](#), “An Act to Increase Maine’s Veterinary Workforce” would create a program similar to the Doctors for Maine’s Future Scholarship Program in order to increase the veterinary workforce in the state. AKC GR and the Maine Federation of Dog Clubs are eager to support this initiative and will monitor for when the public hearing is scheduled by the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business.

**Maine** – AKC GR is pleased to note that Senator Marianne Moore has again filed a Resolution, [SP 669](#), identifying May 1, 2022 as Purebred Dog Day.

**New Hampshire** – [SB 368](#) has been filed at the request of the Commissioner for the Department of Agriculture and Markets to address challenges enforcing the licensed pet vendor requirements. The bill would provide authority to seize animals maintained by a pet vendor and housed in the licensed portion of a premise, if, within 30 days of license revocation, the animals have not been transferred to another person. AKC GR and NH DOGS are seriously concerned about the text and raised constitutional issues among other problems at the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources public hearing held on January 11, 2022.

**New Hampshire** – On January 12, 2022, AKC GR submitted a letter of support to the House Committee on Judiciary hearing [HB 1107](#) which would establish a committee to study the discrimination by housing and landlords to tenants with companion animals and potentially make legislative recommendations.

**New Hampshire** – [HB 366](#) would authorize a court to order psychological evaluation and treatment for animal cruelty caused by animal hoarding disorder. The House Environment and Agriculture Committee held a work session in September 14, where AKC GR reviewed recommended changes to the draft. The committee voted to next secure review and input from the Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, who is a retired judge. AKC GR participated in that review process and the Chairs are now working on amendments. The bill has been referred to an interim study.

**New Hampshire** – House lawmakers have completed the filing of bills for consideration in 2022. LSR 2022-2690 would have prohibited the use of canine units in law enforcement but, after speaking with AKC GR about the value, care and conditions of these working dogs, the sponsor withdrew the proposal.

**New Hampshire** – [HB 1308](#) would prohibit the capture, possession, and propagation of hares and rabbits for hunting, training and field trials. AKC GR has reached out to the bill sponsor is working with impacted dog owners to oppose the bill. Members of multiple hunting organizations are also opposed and joined AKC GR, NH DOGS and New Hampshire beagle clubs testifying in opposition at the public hearing on January 14, 2022 before the House Fish and Game and Marine Resources Committee. The committee will vote on the bill on January 25. [Read more](#) about how to contact the committee in opposition.

**Rhode Island** – [HB 6624](#) would establish an animal abuser registry that requires pet sellers to check the registry prior to transfer and face penalties for transferring an animal to a convicted abuser on the registry. This bill is a re-filed measure that AKC GR has previously expressed concerns with and will do so again.

**Rhode Island** – [HB 7021](#) would authorize the emergency treatment and transport of a police K9 injured in the line of duty. AKC GR supports this bill.

**Vermont** – [HB 504](#) would mandate the drafting of a report on which entities have what responsibilities for animal issues in the state and outline the consolidation of responsibilities under one entity that would provide uniform standards. The Animal Cruelty Investigation Advisory Board submitted such a report to the legislature last year and plans to work with this legislation to advance recommendations in their report. AKC GR and the Vermont Federation of Dog Clubs plans to be involved.

**Vermont** – [SB 155](#) is an omnibus bill establishing a public safety agency also would provide administrative support to the Animal Cruelty Investigation Advisory Board (ACIAB). Last session, the ACIAB was charged with providing training to animal control officers and would benefit from these resources. AKC GR will monitor the bill's progress.

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