

# New England State Issues July 2022

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**Connecticut** – HB 5295 was signed into law on May 10 as Public Act 22-54. It establishes a working group to examine the development of a statewide dog license portal. The group began meeting on June 16 and the Connecticut Federation of Dog Clubs and Responsible Dog Owners' President is participating along with AKC GR.

**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. The bill would create uniform standards regulating dog daycare facilities, boarding kennels and training operations while restricting personal kennels by authorizing municipal animal control officers to determine how many dogs or cats an individual can own after an inspection of their premises upon kennel license application. State regulations would also determine responsible breeding practices. Because legislation regulating dog daycare facilities did not survive the committee process, advocates are aggressively pursuing SB 1322 passage. AKC GR worked with specific stakeholders to ensure collective concerns were addressed. The Senate re-drafted the bill as [SB 2994](#) and passed it quickly with some minor fixes, but a significant negative change to the legal recognition and protections for “personal kennels”. [An alert](#) was issued on July 12.

**Massachusetts** – On July 11, the Massachusetts Senate suspended its rules and approved Senate Bill 2994 (which was previously SB 1322, opposed by AKC). The bill originally sought to address injuries and deaths at dog daycare facilities, but would have negatively impacted individual dog owners, as it included restrictions on the right to own and keep dogs; and made broad, significant changes to state law that would result in duplicative license requirements. Senate Bill 2994 also removes protections in current law for owners of personal kennels. As such, most owners of personal kennels would be subject to municipal licensing and regulations, including inspections of home-based kennels. The bill also removes the recognition in current law of keeping dogs for personal, non-commercial use. AKC GR [issued an alert urging residents to contact the House of Representatives to express opposition.](#)

**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. The bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on Senate Ways and Means.

**Massachusetts** – The Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture heard testimony on three bills to protect research animals, allowing adoption after health examination upon retiring from research activities. AKC GR supported [HB 901](#) and [HB 966](#), but noted that definitions for animal shelter and rescue in the bill were inconsistent with current law. The committee advanced the bill favorably. HB 901 passed the House and has been sent to the Senate Rules Committee for consideration.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 551](#) would create an advisory board, with a shelter and rescue coordinator serving as chair, to oversee various functions of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. AKC GR expressed concerns to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, noting that a formal advisory board with permanent members chaired by a shelter and rescue coordinator is not necessary for the state agency to function effectively. The bill advanced favorably from committee and is in the Senate Rules Committee waiting for placement on the Senate calendar.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 2672](#) was released favorably by the Joint Judiciary Committee as a re-write of nine bills. AKC GR issued [an alert](#) summarizing before testifying at the May 19, 2021, public hearing. The bill would insert domestic animals and livestock into the civil fine structure for lack of adequate shelter or sanitation for dogs. Civil fines collected would be forwarded to the Homeless Fund that provides money for ACO training and the state spay/neuter program. It also provides the court with great latitude in deciding how long the offender will be prohibited from owning animals, including exceptions if an offender can prove they are capable of caring for animals or have sought required counseling. AKC GR is monitoring this bill.

**New Hampshire** – Representative Gallagher reached out to AKC GR for assistance with his bill, HB 1186. It would mandate that emergency shelters allow individuals to relocate with their companion animals when ordered to evacuate. Per NH's Disaster Animal Response Team, four emergency trailers across the state can be deployed, but significant gaps in the emergency response plan exist. AKC GR testified in support of the bill's intent and worked with the committee on an appropriate amendment to require emergency shelters make space for trailers or other pet accommodations on site. [HB 1186, as amended](#), has passed the House and Senate. AKC GR submitted a letter of support to the Governor.

**Rhode Island** – [S. 2443](#) would authorize forfeiture of any animal seized by the Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RISPCA) if the defendant is found guilty and fails to reimburse RISPCA within 30 days for the boarding and care of animals held pending court proceedings. AKC GR issued [an alert](#) noting the lack of protections for one who is found innocent and testified on April 27 before the Senate

Committee on Environment and Agriculture requesting amendments. The committee proposed and adopted an [amended S. 2443](#) responding to AKC concerns and the Senate passed the amended bill on May 17. An identical companion bill was then filed in the House as [H. 8303](#) and considered by the House Judiciary Committee on June 7. Both bills were voted favorably and sent to the Governor for consideration on June 23, 2022.

**Rhode Island** – [H. 7021](#) would authorize the emergency treatment and transport of a police K9 injured in the line of duty. AKC GR supports this bill. AKC GR issued [an alert](#) requesting support before the public hearing by the House Health and Human Services Committee. The committee added stakeholders to assist with establishing policies and procedures and passed [H. 7021 as amended](#). AKC GR issued [an alert](#) in support and the bill passed the House on May 3, 2022. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a public hearing on June 2, AKC submitted supportive testimony and an identical companion bill was then filed as [S.3019](#) for consideration on June 16. On June 23, both chambers voted these bills favorably and they were transmitted to the Governor for consideration.

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