

# New England State Updates November 2024

**Maine** – Three dog related bills are anticipated for 2025 consideration: establishing a certified rabies vaccinator role; authorizing the Animal Welfare Advisory Council to create subcommittees that can fulfill council responsibilities; and creating a new state “kennel” license, in addition to the current “municipal kennel license,” for any person with 5 or more dogs kept in a single location under one ownership for breeding, hunting, show, training, field trials, sledding, competition or exhibition purposes. AKC will provide more information in the coming weeks.

**Massachusetts** – [HB 1718](#) and [SB 1142](#) would establish a taskforce of Massachusetts lawyers and MSPCA/ARL-Boston to review cruelty laws and make recommendations including whether to establish a domestic animal cruelty misdemeanor charge; prohibit sale of animals under 8 weeks and transferring animals roadside with few exceptions; and allow for animal seizure and owner’s payment of board pending court action for suspected neglect. AKC testified in support of the humane care provisions of the bills and requested the committee ensure due process protections and consistent terminology. The Joint Judiciary Committee released a re-draft, now [SB 2757](#), that narrows the bill’s scope to prohibit selling of animals under 8 weeks and transferring animals roadside with few exceptions. The Senate Rules Committee amended and favorably released the measure on July 29 as [SB 2908](#). The amendment also prohibits animal shelters and rescues from transferring animals under 8 weeks of age. After Senate passage, SB 2908 was referred to the committee on House Steering, Policy and Scheduling. The Legislature ended formal lawmaking for the year on August 1 and

it's unclear if the bill will advance during the informal session that ends December 31, 2024.

**New Hampshire** – Legislation is expected that would amend the animal cruelty statute at RSA to 644:8 to insert a definition: “torture” shall be defined as any act or omission that causes intensive or prolonged pain or suffering, causes serious physical injury, or causes the death of an animal due to such act or omission. AKC will provide more information in the coming weeks.

**VT, Burlington** – On November 5 the Burlington City Council Ordinance Committee reviewed and took comment on recommendations by a Dog Task Force Report. Among key recommendations was a provision substituting the word “guardian” for animal “owner” throughout the [proposed article](#). Both AKC and the VT Federation of Dog Clubs submitted testimony in opposition to the change. The Ordinance Committee met in November to discuss comments, and will schedule another meeting shortly.

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