

David Piccini
117 Peter St.
Port Hope, ON L1A 1C5

Dear Mr. Piccini,

I am writing to you today to give you my full support in your quest for repeal of the breed specific language in the Dog Owners' Liability Act (DOLA) of Ontario.

Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) has been in place in the province since August 29, 2005. BSL is a proven knee-jerk reaction put in place by lazy politicians and law makers who are looking for immediate remedies to a particular high profile incident. These politicians want to be hailed as hero's who instantly provided a "solution"; they do not care that their laws are draconic, or even that they are proven as ineffective.

BSL has been responsible for the destruction of thousands of innocent dogs and puppies in Ontario, and have forced good, responsible owners in our province to hide their dogs out of fear of losing them. Ontarians should not have to live in fear because of the type of dog that they have as their family pet - the people in this province deserve better!

I am grateful that there are cities across the province who are starting to realize that BSL is not the answer to ensuring public safety and are repealing their breed specific language. These cities have accepted that the law is expensive, difficult to enforce, and does nothing to ensure responsible ownership. The City of Ottawa should be looked at as an example as to why BSL will never fulfill the promises made by the former Liberal Government of Ontario.

Unlike many municipalities in Ontario, the City of Ottawa does track dog bites, both before and after BSL was implemented in the province. Between the dates of January 1, 2005 until October 31, 2018, the City of Ottawa recorded 6,499 dog bites, as reported by city officials. While the registration rate for dogs in the City is still very low, it is a fair estimate to assume that there are approximately 100,000 dogs living in Ottawa, many who have the potential to be typed as a "pit bull". On average, there are 450 bites per year reported to the City: of these 450 bites, about 20% (~90) warrant charges being laid to the owners, and less than 2% (~9) come from dogs targeted under our current provincial legislation. Ottawa does not have a problem with aggressive dogs of any breed. This should be a clear conclusion to the fact that banning a specific breed of dog has no consequence to the outcome of incidents that occur each year.

The only way to ensure that public safety is achieved is through educational programs that focuses on teaching children how to safely interact with dogs, promoting early dog socialization, and by holding the owners accountable for the actions of their dogs. Without these important factors in place, the promise of safer kinder communities simply can not be achieved. Ottawa clearly demonstrates that BSL is an over-inclusive and under inclusive-law; one that punishes dogs for their appearance, not their behavior. Enforcing a city bylaw that is breed neutral is, in fact, proven as more successful than any other method in ensuring public safety.

I am grateful that there are finally politicians who truly have the safety of the public in mind, and wish to make positive changes to our communities. By removing the breed specific components of DOLA, the province will be well on its way to ensuring safer kinder communities.

Thank you,

Alix Packard - Founder Ottawa Citizens Against Breed Specific Legislation / BSL