



“PIT BULL REGULATION AND PROHIBITION ACT” INTRODUCED IN MICHIGAN

The Issue:

Michigan State Representative Tim Bledsoe has introduced [House Bill 4714](#), known as the “Pit Bull Regulation and Prohibition Act”. The bill sets forth certain dates by which a person will be banned from owning, selling, breeding, or possessing a “pit bull”. If enacted, this legislation would completely ban the ownership of pit bulls in Michigan over a ten year period.

The Impact:

HB 4717 classifies a “pit bull” as “any one of the following breeds of terrier, a dog displaying the majority of physical traits of any one or more of the breeds listed below, or a dog exhibiting the distinguishing characteristics that substantially conform to the standards established by the American Kennel Club or United Kennel Club for any one of the breeds listed below:

- An American pit bull terrier;
- An American Staffordshire bull terrier; or
- A Staffordshire bull terrier.”

Under this legislation, the following time provision and restrictions will become effective:

- One year after the effective date of this act, a person will be banned from breeding or selling a pit bull in Michigan;
- Four years after the effective date of this act, no person will be allowed to own or possess a pit bull that has not been sterilized; and
- Ten years after the effective date of this act, no person may own or possess a pit bull **AT ALL**.

Anyone found in violation of this act is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment of up to 93 days, community service for not more than 500 hours, or both. In addition, the court may impose a fine ranging from \$500 to \$2,000 and order the person to pay the costs of prosecution.

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC has historically battled bills that prohibit entire breeds of dogs. As most behavioral experts recognize, the breed of a dog does not dictate its disposition. Rather, training and care of the animal is what will determine its tendency towards aggressiveness. Various breeds of dogs have been targeted over the years as vicious or dangerous animals, and so-called “pit bulls” (which are not actually a recognized breed at all) are simply the favorite target of the day. Prohibiting possession, owning, or selling of these animals will deprive pet owners of loving animals, but it will not prevent those who desire to own vicious dogs from acquiring other breeds that are just as effective for the purpose.

Recommended Action:

HB 4714 has been assigned to the [House Regulatory Reform Committee](#) where it awaits its first committee hearing. If you have any questions, please contact PIJAC’s Bambi Nicole Osborne at 202-452-1525, ext. 105 or via email at bambi@pijac.org.

Visit the [Breaking News page](#) of the PIJAC website often for updates on this and other legislation.

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On behalf of pets, responsible pet owners, and the pet industry, we thank you!