

Fairfield County Dog Warden  
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Good morning Co-Chairs Grendell and Galonski and sub-committee members. I am Todd McCullough, Chief Dog Warden in Fairfield County. I currently serve as the regional director of Southeasten Ohio for the Ohio County Dog Warden Association and as the Dog Warden representative for the Ohio Animal Welfare Federation. I am here to testify as an interested party on House Bill 37. I began as dog warden in the summer of 2013. This of course was after the new laws went into effect in 2012. I think learning these new laws while not having a background in the previous versions afforded me the opportunity to ask a lot of reasonable questions that many of my colleagues were not able to answer. This is how I came to learn there was room for improvement to the current statute. I would like to thank representatives Antani and Holmes for their efforts to improve upon what was created in 2012.

I am encouraged by the efforts of our representatives and I am here today to offer my support for continued refinement of this legislation. This most recent version offers several areas of improvement including:

- The requirement of training for dog wardens and deputies. This is a necessary improvement for consistency and implementation of this law state wide.
- The requirement of timely response to notices and postings left by dog wardens. This is very helpful for resolving issues in a timely manner and preventing further violations of the law.
- Improvements to the defintions of dangerous and vicious dogs. I am encouraged to see there are additional considerations for normal animal behavior to be included.

While I applaud the efforts thus far, I do think there are some items which warrant further discussion and considerations. Let me state for the record that I am not here today to express a formal position for the Ohio Animal Welfare Federation. With that said, I feel confident to say that my colleagues in that organization will have concerns being included in the list of locations where dogs can be taken to be destroyed for matters relating to dangerous and vicious dog laws.

I am also sure they will join me in concerns about designating dogs as dangerous when they cause minor injuries to other dogs. Minor injuries can be caused during normal play and can occur as part of normal animal behavior. I believe there should be a higher threshold for designating a dog as dangerous.

A final concern I have is the 30 day requirement for the payment of expenses for dogs that are being held at county shelters. It is my experience that the financial obligations of ownership of an animal should not be delayed while court processes play out. It is far too easy for someone to extend the process to such lengths of time that it is unrealistic for shelters to receive fair compensation. Further, on more than one occasion I have witnessed these matters drug out

beyond the point where it becomes inhumane. I would favor a more frequent payment process that must be continued throughout adjudication.

I believe the current law does have room for improvement and I again thank you for your time and attention to that. I am here today to offer my support in your continued efforts to making the necessary improvements to help protect the people and animals of the State of Ohio. In closing, I would like to offer to volunteer my time to discuss this matter in more detail if it could be helpful.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I welcome any questions that you may have.

Todd McCullough

Regional Director for Southeastern Ohio for Ohio County Dog Warden Association  
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Dog Warden, Fairfield County