



OFFICE OF THE LICKING COUNTY DOG WARDEN

544 Dog Leg Rd Heath, Ohio 43056

Phone: 740-349-6563

Fax: 740-323-0126

Chief Larry Williams

To: Honorable Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

From: Larry Dale Williams, Chief Dog Warden of Licking County Dog Warden Office

Date: October 2025

Subject: Testimony in support of SB 185 / HB 247 "Avery's Law"

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as a proponent to SB 185 / HB 247 "Avery's Law".

My name is Larry Williams, Chief Dog Warden for Licking County, here representing the Ohio County Dog Warden Association (OCDWA) as the SE Director and Chief Dog Warden at the Licking County Dog Warden Office.

I am here today on behalf of the Ohio County Dog Warden Association and myself to express support for SB 185/ HB 247 "Avery's Law".

In my 17 plus years working in a Dog Wardens Office I have seen the laws regarding vicious and dangerous dogs change only once to what we currently have. These laws have proven to not keep the public safe from dangerous or vicious dog attacks. The key points that support our position are:

1st - Dog Wardens need a way to impound/seize vicious or dangerous dogs when they act in an unprovoked manner. Seizing these dogs would keep the public safe from another incident happening, not allowing them to seriously maul or kill a child or a person.

2nd - Clarification in law to get owners, keeper or harborers in front of court so court may order obedience training, liability insurance, or euthanasia depending on the evidence and testimony from the victims and witness's regarding the injuries or behavior of the vicious or dangerous dog.

3rd - Hold the owner, keeper or harbinger of the dog accountable for their dogs' actions especially on a subsequent incident.

Case one: (2nd incident where dog was involved after dangerous designation)

In Oct. of 2023 without provocation a dog caused injury to next door neighbor of the dog owner, the investigation resulted in a dangerous dog designation to owner for that dog and charges for failure to confine dog (UM) and failure to license dog (UM).

In Sept. of 2024 Licking County Dog Wardens Office responds to a dog bite/attack incident with a Sheriff's Deputy on scene holding pressure on the victims wounds. Upon Licking County Deputy Dog Warden arriving on scene, dog was confined to owners house by dog owners minor child and victim was being loaded and transported to hospital.



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Evidence from investigation showed this was the second unprovoked biting incident from the same dog. Evidence in this incident reflects a vicious dog, a mauling, a second unprovoked biting incident, involving the same dog.

This victim sustained serious injuries that include but not limited to degloved left thumb, chunk of flesh torn from right forearm exposing fatty tissue, lacerations to back of the right and left heel, scrapes on left knee, multiple punctures of the right calf. That does not include any contusions or any internal injuries or all the treatment, or therapy needed, or any emotional trauma involved. Results of this investigation were charges to the dog owner for failure to confine vicious dog (M1) [see Supreme Court Ruling 2019-Ohio-5159], Failure to display dangerous dog license (M4), failure to display regular dog license (MM).

Case two: (1st incident where dog caused serious injury)

Dog owner ordered pizza, had it delivered to the house, upon arriving at the house, the delivery driver entered the fenced in front yard and delivered pizza to dog owner, as owner was taking pizzas inside 3 dogs slipped past her. One of those dogs grabbed the delivery drivers arm. Driver pulled away and was making his way towards his vehicle outside of the fenced in yard, when the dog grabbed ahold of him pulling him down to the ground. The dog attacked driver multiple times while the owner was trying to get the dog away from the driver.

Serious injuries sustained by driver were but not limited to, portion of scalp was torn off, lacerations to scalp, injuries to left arm, right arm.

Dog owner also sustained injuries to her right hand while trying to get her dog under control.

Dog owner was charged with failure to confine dog (UM) and failure to register dog (UM).

Unprovoked dog attack or mauling's and fatalities are happening across Ohio. Without the ability to impound dogs that have committed an unprovoked vicious or dangerous dog act the outcomes are to designate the dog and issue charges (most of the time those charges are minor misdemeanors) and hope the dog owner, keeper or harbinger appeal the designation so you can be in front of a Judge. If not appealed, that means the dog will stay in the home to attack again. There is Public outcry when a dog has attacked unprovoked and by law gets to stay with owner.

Therefore, I urge the Chair and Judiciary Committee to vote in favor of SB 185 "Avery's Law" to help prevent subsequent mauling's or worse fatalities caused by dogs.

Thank you, Chair and members of the Judiciary Committee, for allowing me to provide testimony in support of SB 185. I can offer my answer to any questions you may have.

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