



STRONGER COUNTIES. STRONGER OHIO.

209 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309

Phone: 614-221-5627 • Fax: 614-221-6986

Toll Free: 888-757-1904 • www.ccao.org

Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

Ohio Senate Judiciary Committee

House Bill 247 – Proponent Testimony

Licking County Commissioner Tim Bubb – County Commissioners

Association of Ohio

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Tim Bubb. I am a Licking County Commissioner and past President of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 247.

CCAO's support of this bill followed conversations with Representative Miller, and the Ohio County Dog Warden's Association. The Ohio County Dog Warden's Association is an affiliate member of CCAO, and we are pleased to support HB 247 alongside their association. Counties across Ohio have recently experienced several high-profile incidents involving nuisance, dangerous, or vicious dogs attacking citizens.



We believe that HB 247 will prevent future attacks from taking place across Ohio. The bill accomplishes this goal by updating the statutes surrounding nuisance, vicious, and dangerous dogs and provides Ohio's dog wardens with the tools to enforce the statutes.

The bill creates a hearing process for a court to designate dogs as nuisance, dangerous, or vicious dogs based on certain criteria. HB 247 replaces the "one free bite" rule that currently exists in the Ohio Revised Code with respect to dog bites. Under the bill, a dog can be designated a dangerous or vicious dog at the first incident if the dog kills or causes serious physical injury to a person or livestock.

Additionally, HB 247 imposes new requirements for owners of vicious or dangerous dogs and increases penalties for violations of those requirements. The bill also provides tools to the county dog warden to enforce these violations by clarifying that dog wardens have the authority to make arrests and enforce all of Ohio's Dog Law, rather than only specified provisions under current law. We also appreciate the potential for increased revenue to fund the dog warden's office through the encouragement of dog registration with the county auditor and increased

registration fees for dangerous and vicious dogs contained in the substitute bill.

Following our initial proponent testimony, the House Public Safety Committee adopted a substitute bill that combined key elements from other similar pieces of legislation on this issue. Some of the changes include restoring current law under which a warden can designate a dog, subject to owner appeal, if the animal did not kill or seriously injure a person and if the warden determines the dog may remain safely at the owner's residence. Additionally, the changes remove the requirement for courts to conduct dog designation hearings concurrently with criminal proceedings against the owner for dog attack. The changes are common sense measures, and we were pleased to see them included in the bill.

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudon, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 247. We appreciate Representatives Miller, Lawson-Rowe, and Thomas coming together to combine their bills into one bill to address this important issue. If the committee has any questions, I would be happy to answer them at this time.