

My name is Carol Miller, I am an Ohio resident, a Registered Nurse, and the survivor of a violent dog attack in 2007. I have followed the dangerous dog issue since that time. I am here to testify as a proponent of SB 151.

When Ohio law was changed in 2012, those changes were not well thought out from a public safety stand point. This must change. Ohio citizens have suffered; there have been 10 dog attacks that were fatal to humans in the first three years after passage of HB 14. In the previous DECADE there were five fatal dog maulings in our state. There have been hundreds of attacks on children and adults in our state that ranged from bites to life changing maulings. Ohio citizens pay for these attacks through Medicaid; owners of violent dogs do not insure them and suffer no consequence for the attacks.

Zainabou Drame, age 6, of Cincinnati was attacked by a neighbor's pit bulls in 2014. Zainabou lost her tongue in the attack, her face was peeled from her skull and had to be sewn back in place. She is unable to speak or swallow. She is unable to eat. She is fed via tube inserted through her abdominal wall directly into her stomach. She was not expected to survive, homicide investigators were assigned to her case while she was kept in a medically induced coma. She was hospitalized for months. Zainabou's medical bills quickly soared to over a million dollars and those medical bills will continue as long as she lives. The owner of the dogs was never charged for her injuries, he went to jail for a drug offense but local authorities complained that Ohio law gave them no appropriate charges. There were no consequences for the dog owner but Zainabou's life is changed forever.

Countless Ohio pets have been killed or seriously mauled; these maulings appear in the news regularly. The owner of one of these dogs will speak today. Veterinarian bills for peaceful dogs attacked in our communities are paid by the owners of those peaceful dogs. Bills can run into the thousands of dollars with no guarantee that the pet will live, many do not. Violent dogs are returned to their owners, already

proven irresponsible by allowing the attack. These irresponsible dog owners are not likely to change their behavior; there is no consequence for them. We read over and over “an investigation is ongoing and the dog may be declared dangerous.” A dog that has already killed someone else’s pet has already made it clear that he is dangerous but Ohio law allows these animals to be returned to their owners and back into our communities. Ohio residents deserve better.

Current Ohio law, passed in 2012, was promoted to Ohio lawmakers as “finally giving dog wardens the tools to deal with dangerous dogs” but has fallen far short of that goal. Prosecutors could not even charge the owners of vicious dogs with a felony after they brutally killed Klonda Richey while she stood outside her own home; she had already installed an 8 foot security fence around her home to protect herself from these dogs. Prosecutors were left with charging woefully insignificant misdemeanors. SB 151 creates accountability with felony charges for the owners of dogs that kill. There is no accountability in current Ohio law, when there is no consequence for violation of law, there is no compliance. This is human nature.

SB 151 sets out clear procedures and requirements for dog wardens and demands responsible action from the owners of cited dogs. While SB 151 protects the due process rights of dog owners it also protects the rights of Ohio residents to file affidavits of complaint describing dangerous behaviors of dogs. SB 151 allows the humane destruction of vicious dogs after final determination by the courts. SB 151 declares that any dog that kills a human or a companion animal is a vicious dog per Ohio law. SB 151 demands notification of the county dog warden and the county board of health when a known dangerous dog is to be relocated into a new community. SB 151 requires registration, vaccination, neuter or spay, dangerous dog signage, safe containment of and insurance for known dangerous dogs.

It is time to reform Ohio’s dog laws. Ohio residents have the right to feel safe on their property and

enjoy the safe use of their communities without threat of dog mauling. Sb 151 deserves your support and your vote. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.