

# HOUSE BILL 956

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By: **Delegates Carr, Anderson, Frush, Gutierrez, Healey, Kramer, Lam, S. Robinson, Smith, Waldstreicher, and K. Young**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2015

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

### **Criminal Law – Leaving Dogs Outside and Unattended – Prohibition**

FOR the purpose of altering the provisions of a prohibition from leaving a dog outside and unattended; defining certain terms; and generally relating to dogs left unattended outdoors.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Criminal Law  
Section 10–623  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

### **Article – Criminal Law**

10–623.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

[(2) “Collar” means a device constructed of nylon, leather, or similar material specifically designed to be used around the neck of a dog.]

**(2) “HARNESS” MEANS A STRAP MADE OF NYLON, LEATHER, CLOTH OR SIMILAR MATERIAL SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BE USED AROUND THE SHOULDERS AND CHEST OF A DOG.**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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(3) “Restraint” means a chain, rope, tether, leash, cable, or other device that attaches a dog to a stationary object or trolley system.

[(b) A person may not leave a dog outside and unattended by use of a restraint:

(1) that unreasonably limits the movement of the dog;

(2) that uses a collar that:

(i) is made primarily of metal; or

(ii) is not at least as large as the circumference of the dog’s neck plus 1 inch;

(3) that restricts the access of the dog to suitable and sufficient clean water or appropriate shelter;

(4) in unsafe or unsanitary conditions; or

(5) that causes injury to the dog.]

**(B) A PERSON MAY NOT LEAVE A DOG OUTSIDE AND UNATTENDED:**

**(1) FOR MORE THAN 2 HOURS IN A 24–HOUR PERIOD;**

**(2) WITHOUT ACCESS TO SUITABLE AND SUFFICIENT CLEAN WATER AND APPROPRIATE SHELTER;**

**(3) IN UNSAFE OR UNSANITARY CONDITIONS;**

**(4) IN A PEN OR ENCLOSURE THAT IS LESS THAN 100 SQUARE FEET;**

**OR**

**(5) BY USE OF A RESTRAINT THAT:**

**(I) UNREASONABLY LIMITS THE MOVEMENT OF THE DOG;**

**(II) DOES NOT USE A PROPERLY FITTED HARNESS;**

**(III) IS A LENGTH THAT IS LESS THAN THE GREATER OF:**

**1. FIVE TIMES THE LENGTH OF THE DOG, AS MEASURED FROM THE TIP OF THE DOG’S NOSE TO THE BASE OF THE DOG’S TAIL; OR**

**2. 15 FEET LONG;**

**WEIGHT;**

**(IV) WEIGHS MORE THAN ONE-EIGHTH OF THE DOG'S BODY**

**(V) DOES NOT HAVE A SWIVEL ATTACHMENT AT EACH END; OR**

**(VI) CAUSES INJURY TO THE DOG.**

(c) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 90 days or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2015.