



Maryland's Association of Animal Care and Control Agencies and Humane Societies

**P.O. Box 1143
Easton, Maryland 21601**

**SB 925 Criminal Law- Dangerous and Potentially Dangerous Dogs
Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Tuesday March 3, 2020**

Dear Honorable Chairman Smith and members of the committee:

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland, the state organization comprised of animal control agencies and humane societies unanimously stands in opposition to SB 925. We believe the proposed changes to the current MD Dangerous Dog Law are failing to place public safety as a priority.

The purpose of Animal Control in the State of Maryland is public and animal safety. The Dangerous Dog Statute is an integral component of our tools to keep people and pets safe in Maryland. The changes to the current law being proposed by SB 925 weaken the current law. The concerns of our membership are as follows:

- The opportunity for removal of a designation after a period of time without an incident for those dogs deemed Potentially Dangerous does not mean there is not the propensity for another incident in the future.
 - The reason for the determination is for public safety.
 - The owner following the restrictions is why there have not been any further incidents, not necessarily a change in animal behavior. If the owners follow the restrictions as set, there should never again be an incident as the law currently stands.
 - Serious concerns regarding liability issues involving the court, agency, and/or organization which reverses a determination if there is an incident after the reversal.
- The addition of declassification hearings in the MD District Court would result in even greater workloads for already overburdened staff at almost every animal control agency in Maryland.

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland has grave concerns regarding any changes to the Maryland State Dangerous Dog Statute. **We believe any changes to the current law would not be in the best interest of public safety, which is the purpose of such a law.** This bill, though well intended, is not in the best interest of public safety and therefore we respectfully oppose the legislation as written and request your unfavorable vote on the bill.

Thank you for your time, I welcome you to contact me at any time regarding our concerns.

Sincerely,

Patty Crankshaw-Quimby

Executive Director/Chief Animal Control Officer: Talbot Humane/ Talbot County Animal Control

President: Professional Animal Workers of Maryland