



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

January 28, 2022

American Kennel Club Testimony on SB 38 - Public Safety – Fire and Rescue – Veterinary Care of Retired Fire and Rescue K–9s

The American Kennel Club (AKC) provides this written testimony in support of SB 38. By way of introduction, the AKC is the world's largest purebred dog registry. We are a club of more than 5,000 local and breed dog clubs around the country, including 78 clubs in Maryland. Our affiliated clubs maintain America's largest purebred rescue network, and for over 135 years AKC has been proud to be the only non-profit purebred registry devoted to the health and well-being of all dogs.

Existing Chapter 90 of 2021 requires a State or local law enforcement agency that removes a publicly owned dog used in law enforcement work from duty to reimburse an individual who, under a written agreement with the law enforcement agency, takes possession of the dog for reasonable and necessary veterinary treatment provided to the dog. This bill would extend the requirement to a State or local fire and rescue entity that removes from duty a dog used in fire and rescue work.

Like our law enforcement dogs, dogs used in fire and rescue work should be afforded the same gratitude. Oftentimes, these working dogs provide services that cannot readily be performed by humans. When the time comes that they can no longer perform the important service for which they have been trained, they deserve to retire into loving homes. Unfortunately, the cost of veterinary care could be a deterrent for some families that would love to adopt these dogs, including their professional handlers, who often wish to adopt the dog they have worked so close with for many years.

Given the work requirements and conditions these dog work under, they may be more likely require veterinary care in retirement than their companion animal counterparts. Much like the legislation passed last year for law enforcement dogs, this legislation would ensure that retired fire and rescue dogs do not fail to receive veterinary care because of financial barriers faced by their owners. To help offset the cost, this bill also allows individuals to make contributions to the K-9 Compassionate Care Fund that was established in Chapter 90 last year.

Again, AKC supports this bill and believes working dogs and those who would adopt them upon retirement deserve the support this bill would provide. As such, we urge a favorable report on SB 38.

Thank you for reviewing and considering my testimony.

Charley Hall

Charley Hall
Legislative Analyst/Community Outreach Coordinator
American Kennel Club
8051 Arco Corporate Drive, Suite 100, Raleigh NC 27617
t: 919-816-3971 | e: charles.hall@akc.org
Visit our website: www.akc.org
Follow us on: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)