



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

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Director, Policy Analysis
Government Relations

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

North Dakota House Industry, Business and Labor Committee
State Capitol
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0360

RE: AKC Supports HB 1175

Chairman Lefor and Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) writes on behalf of our nine AKC dog clubs and the thousands of responsible dog owners in North Dakota to express support of House Bill 1175, which you are scheduled to consider on Wednesday, January 27, 2021.

As you may know, the American Kennel Club was founded in 1884 and is the world's largest purebred dog registry and the only not-for-profit purebred dog registry devoted to the health and wellbeing of all dogs. The AKC, along with our North Dakota local dog clubs, all of which are non-profit organizations, are dedicated to promoting responsible dog ownership and breeding throughout the state, including hosting dog events such as breed conformation shows, field trials, obedience trials, and other performance events that focus on a dog's ability to perform jobs for which its breed was originally developed. In 2019, the AKC licensed and sanctioned 76 events in North Dakota, in which more than 7,700 dogs participated.

Last year, in an effort to ensure the safety of exhibitors and animals, the American Kennel Club provided our local clubs with extensive procedures to be used in conjunction with U.S. Centers for Disease Control and state guidelines to follow when hosting events and shows. The ability for local clubs to host events is crucial, as they generally rely on competitor entry fees as their primary source of revenue. However, due to both gathering restrictions that were imposed in 2020 and concerns that a competitor or volunteer's exposure to COVID-19 may leave them financially responsible for such exposure, local non-profit dog clubs were unable to host events throughout much of last year. Without conducting events to earn revenue and without reasonable protections from liability exposure, many clubs are facing uncertain, even existential, futures because of COVID-19. The AKC believes HB 1175 represents a reasonable step that would help address these concerns and free organizations from unreasonable liability exposure while not protecting malicious actions or those intended to cause harm. For these reasons, we support HB 1175 and encourage its passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to further discuss our position with you at your convenience. I can be reached at 919-816-3503 or phil.guidry@akc.org.

Sincerely,

Phil M. Guidry, J.D.
Director, Policy Analysis

Founded in 1884; a not-for-profit corporation

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