

I am writing today as follow up on discussions re: Ontario's Breed Specific Legislation (BSL), commonly referred to across the province as the "pit bull" ban.

Prior to the elections, multiple communications were exchanged between animal welfare advocates and the now elected PC and NDP government officials. All candidates stated they were in favour of lifting BSL from our legislation. Now that the government is officially formed and is a PC majority, I am requesting that you remain true to your promise and repeal the breed specific components of the Ontario Dog Owner's Liability Act (DOLA).

There is evidence, backed up by scientific research, statistics and expert testimony, that BSL has never increased public safety in Ontario or anywhere else it was ever implemented. It is past time to stop throwing away millions of dollars every year on an unscientific, inefficient law that has done nothing but devastate innocent, responsible dog owning families of this province, not to mention eliminate their family pets. Approximately 5000 dogs have been destroyed due to this legislation. 5000 families who have been targeted and traumatized due to the laws put in place by the previous government. Inconsolable children, dealing with the sudden loss of their best friend; people suffering immensely due to the government's endorsement of myths; people instantly criminalized due to the appearance of their dogs. BSL is about way more than just dogs. The people of Ontario deserve better than this!

The province of Quebec recently conducted an extensive study into the consequences of a proposed provincial breed ban. They concluded that in no way would the people of Quebec be any safer by trying to eliminate a type of dog from society. There is absolutely no precedent for the government of Ontario to continue this practice. The recent extensive study conducted by our neighbour, and most comparative province, has confirmed the recommendations experts & citizens have repeatedly conveyed to the government since Ontario's ban was implemented; BSL does NOT work!

The newly elected government has finally given the people of Ontario hope that things will once again be made right for the responsible owners of the province, as well as their pets. There is not one animal expert in the world who would confirm that BSL is the answer to promoting public safety. Ontario is the only province or state in North America that condemns specific breeds of dogs.

It is more than time for the government to stop lying to the people about their safety. Dogs are a product of their environment. Irresponsible ownership is always to blame when behavioural issues are developed. If there is an issue with the dog, the real issue lies with the owner, and that is where the focus should be if the goal is to truly attain safer kinder communities. Blaming the dog is not only illogical; it is unethical and dangerous to the ingenuous general public.

As time is of the essence for many innocent dogs and their families, I am requesting your response at the earliest opportunity. Please do not let the new government become enemies of the Ontario animal welfare community.

Appreciate your time and consideration into this extremely important matter.