From: Jacques LaFleur
To: dencc - City Council
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please support changes to Denver"s "pitbull" ordinance
Date: Sunday, January 19, 2020 5:32:40 PM

Dear distinguished members of the Denver City Council,

I urge you to support the proposed changes to Denver's "pitbull" ban/ordinance. My reasons for supporting the proposed changes are provided below - including how the ban directly impacted me and my ability to purchase a home in Denver.

1) I moved to the Denver metro area in 2011 to begin my new job as an IT systems engineer; however, I abandoned my plan to live in Denver when my real-estate agent informed me of the ban (since I own a loving and playful American Staffordshire Terrier dog). Because giving up my wonderful dog (who I consider a part of my family) was not an option, I decided to purchase a home in Superior, CO and commute to Denver instead. In addition to impacting my ability to purchase a home in Denver, as a productive and responsible citizen (I haven't so much as a parking ticket in the last 10 years) I also found the ban to be entirely inequitable and also discriminatory.

2) I find that the argument for the ban is unbalanced because the argument is framed as if "pitbulls" (which as a group includes at least 4+ distinct breeds) are the only dogs that can have strong bites or the only dogs that can cause serious bite-related incidents and fatalities. This is entirely untrue - since only 2016, over 40 different breeds have been responsible for fatal dog attacks in the United States. (Source: https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://www.pitbullinfo.org/fatal-dog-attacks.html__;!!M87Ej6RJKlw!H6LLw_wk7Brpl4mo352nA_S_E8-Gl6jDK3FN7sRO9NWVvkSCqYDQPwLZVrU_Wt8K$)

3) It's not just about opinions - BSL is not supported by science. Over 10 recent peer-reviewed studies have found that BSL does not improve public safety. (Source: https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://www.pitbullinfo.org/dog-bite-scientific-studies.html__;!!M87Ej6RJKlw!H6LLw_wk7Brpl4mo352nA_S_E8-Gl6jDK3FN7sRO9NWVvkSCqYDQPwLZVs6pP7N7$)

4) The proposed change will allow Denver to better address relevant public safety factors such as a dog's behavior, history of aggression, irresponsible ownership, and neglect - instead of arbitrarily discriminating against great dogs and responsible citizens because of their dog's appearance.

Finally, the proposed changes represent a reasonable and equitable balance between responsible dog owners (such as myself) and public safety; therefore, for this and the above reasons I strongly urge you to support the proposed changes. Furthermore, the proposed changes would also upgrade Denver's animal code to be in closer alignment with modern, breed-neutral best practices for public safety.

I appreciate your time considering my feedback and I look forward to positive progress on this very important issue. Also, I would look forward to the day when I (and my entire family including my dog) could consider Denver home.

Thank you and respectfully,

Jacques LaFleur
Superior, CO