From: Victoria Chenault
To: dencc - City Council
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Overturn Mayor Hancock"s Veto!!!
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 12:22:57 PM

Dear Denver City Council,

As a pit bull advocate, former pit bull owner, and Denver city resident, I beg, plead, and urge you to vote to overturn Mayor Hancock's veto of the pit bull legislation pass last week.

I am certain that City Council has been inundated with e-mails based on fearmongering and propaganda demanding that the council members keep the pit bull ban in place. And, I am certain that those e-mails include attachments with unfounded statistics purporting to support why pit bulls are inherently dangerous dogs or impassioned pleas as to why people fear for their lives with pit bulls. (Why is it that the rational voices are often drowned out by the fearful ones?)

In lieu of my reiterating research-based facts as to why all of the "anti-pit bullers" are wrong and unfounded in their beliefs (I hope that City Council has already conducted their due diligence), I write to you to tell you my own personal experience as I ask that Council look beyond the biased fear and unsubstantiated facts and look to what is rational and reasoned.

As a first-year law student in New Orleans, my sister found a thin, white and brown female pit bull on an abandoned construction site. When I first saw her, I was apprehensive and fearful because I had zero knowledge of pit bulls except heresy. My sister insisted that pit bulls were the best companion animals (she owned one at the time) and everything negative I ever heard about them was untrue. She could not have been more correct. I took Lily into my home, trained her, loved her, and yes, kept my head up high as people crossed the street when I walked by with her, or vehemently question why I would "ever have a dog like *that*." Lily slept under the covers in my bed head on my pillow, crawled onto my lap and head because she couldn't get close enough to me, jumped into the cars of strangers with doe eyes asking them to love her, and licked any stranger until they cried "Uncle". After our first child was born, Lily would sit on the floor with our infant son as he would, quite literally, stick his finger through her eye socket, pull her tail, and sit on her back - she did so patiently and lovingly. **This behavior is not the exception, this the rule with pit bulls.** Anyone who has had any personal experience with owning a pit bull will have very similar stories. They are, quite literally, exceptionally loving and passionate animals.

However, had I lived in Denver with Lily, my beloved dog, who in her 13 years on this planet never showed a single sign of aggression or ferocity, would have been summarily scooped up by animal control, and put down. Why? Because of the way she looked. Meanwhile, the Denver citizen with their aggressive and off-leash Akita, Golden Retriever, Dalmatian, German Shepherd, or Heinz 57 mutt, if reported to animal control, would have received a slap on the wrist, a fine, and a stern talking-to, but that dog is rarely at risk of losing its life. Think about it: Denver KILLS good family pets because of the way that dog looks, not because of a history of abuse and/or irresponsibility by the owner, or a history of aggression from the dog. It simply defies all logic and reasoning.

I'm sure you've heard it – there are no bad breeds, just bad owners. Unfortunately, the reputation

of pit bulls is the result of a lot of bad owners. I empathize with pit bull dogs and the plight that they have faced over the last 30 years in Denver, but I hope that Denver will look past it and change. Denver prides itself on being progressive, so I hope that City Council continues that trend.

And, when the ban is overturned, our family will always and forever be a pit bull family.

Thank you for your time.

Victoria Chenault
District 1

Victoria Davis Chenault, Attorney
Busch Law Firm PLLC
www.wirelesscounsel.com
victoria.chenault@wirelesscounsel.com
303.515.7613

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