

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: 6/18/96

Reference No.: CB-74-1996

Proposer: Council Member Gourdine

Draft No.: 1

Sponsors: Council Member Gourdine

Item Title: To define Pit Bull Terrier and Rottweiler dogs;
prohibiting any person from owning, keeping, or
harboring Pit Bulls or Rottweilers under certain
circumstances, and providing for penalties for violation

Drafter: Maurene Epps-Webb
Office of Law

Resource Personnel: Council Member Gourdine

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

Date Presented: 6/18/96

Executive Action: __/__/__ __

Committee Referral:(1) 6/18/96 HEHS

Effective Date: __/__/__

Committee Action:(1) 7/2/96 NR

Committee Referral:(2) 7/9/96 C.O.W.

Committee Action:(2) __/__/__ ____

Date Introduced: __/__/__

Pub. Hearing Date: (1) __/__/__ __:__ __

Council Action: (1) __/__/__ ____

Council Votes: SD:__, DB:__, JE:__, IG:__, AMc:__, WM:__, RVR:__, AS:__, MW:__

Pass/Fail: _

Remarks: (C.O.W. Public Hearing to be at 1:30 P.M. on 7/29/96)

HEALTH, EDUCATION & HUMAN SERVICES COM. REPORT

DATE: 7/2/96

Committee Vote: No Recommendation, 4-0 (In favor: Council Members Gourdine, Bailey, Scott and Wilson).

This legislation will amend Subtitle 3 of the County Code to define Pit Bull Terrier and Rottweiler dogs, prohibit the ownership or harboring of these dogs under certain circumstances and provide penalties for violation of this law. Dogs owned prior to August 1, 1996 could be maintained under

certain conditions. These include registration, identification, securing of the animal in a building, kennel or via a muzzle and payment of an annual registration fee of \$100. Penalties to the owner for violation of this law include up to a \$1,000 fine or up to six months imprisonment. Concern was raised that this bill apply to any dangerous or vicious dog rather than a specific breed. Cecilia Stewart of the Health Department reported there have been 416 dog bites of various breeds this year as of June 28, 1996. Some citizens suggested muzzling would cause these dogs to be more vicious. There seemed to be general consensus on a need to assure more responsible ownership. One measure proposed was to severely increase fines for irresponsible behavior.

The Office of Law finds CB-74 to be constitutional and in proper legislative form. The Health Department expressed concern regarding public protection from vicious animals in the County and recommends strict enforcement of existing animal control ordinances and increased fines.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/FISCAL IMPACT

(Includes reason for proposal, as well as any unique statutory requirements)

This bill will provide a mechanism to protect the public from the unique hazard to safety represented by the ownership and possession of Pit Bull Terriers and Rottweilers within the County. Current owners of such animals will be able to keep their animals if registered and tagged, and maintained in a manner to ensure public safety.

Audits and Investigations noted there may be some positive fiscal impact on the County as a result of adopting CB-74 related to maintenance fees or penalties from violations. A specific amount cannot be determined at this time.

CODE INDEX TOPICS: