RESPONSIBLE DOG LEGISLATION FOR AURORA COLORADO

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BSL DOES NOT MAKE COMMUNITIES MORE SAFE

Major organizations such as the ASPCA, American Bar Association, Humane Society, and the American Veterinary Medical Association, AKC, along with numerous other professional groups, have taken a stand against breed-specific legislation (BSL). This position is informed by research indicating that BSL is not effective in enhancing community safety. In fact, such legislation may inadvertently hinder responsible dog ownership by limiting access to vital resources like training, socialization, and medical care for certain breeds, making communities more dangerous.

All evidence collected from studies and reports suggests that focusing on responsible ownership practices across all dog breeds is more effective in fostering community safety. This perspective has led to a growing trend: hundreds of cities across the United States are repealing breed-specific restrictions that gained popularity in the 80s and 90s. It's important to recognize that any dog, regardless of its breed, has the potential to exhibit dangerous behavior if not properly trained. Notably, recent studies reinforce the fact that breed is not an indicator of behavior, nor do the various breeds considered "pit" show any notable increase in aggression on temperament scales than other breeds.

Every generation has their stigmatized breeds. In the 50s and 60s it was German Shepherds. In the 70s, Doberman's took the top spot, followed by Rottweiler's in the 80s. In the 90s, with the rise of mass-media, pit bulls enjoyed the reputation of being "guard dogs", leading them to be popularized in pop-culture as violent in nature, a perspective that would result in more people adopting pit breeds for the purpose of protection as opposed to adopting them as a companion animals. This would lead media to encouraging stories relevant to the breed over other dog incidents, propogating a dangerous cycle of misinformation and engaging in a coverage that further stigmatized the various "pit" breeds.

FOUR WAYS BSL MAKES AURORA MORE DANGEROUS

IT DISCOURAGES ACCESS TO VETERINARY CARE

The primary factor in predicting a dog's aggression is not its breed, but rather if it has been spayed or neutered. Criminalizing an entire subset of dogs discourages owners from seeking necessary veterinary care.

IT DISCOURAGES ACCESS TO TRAINING

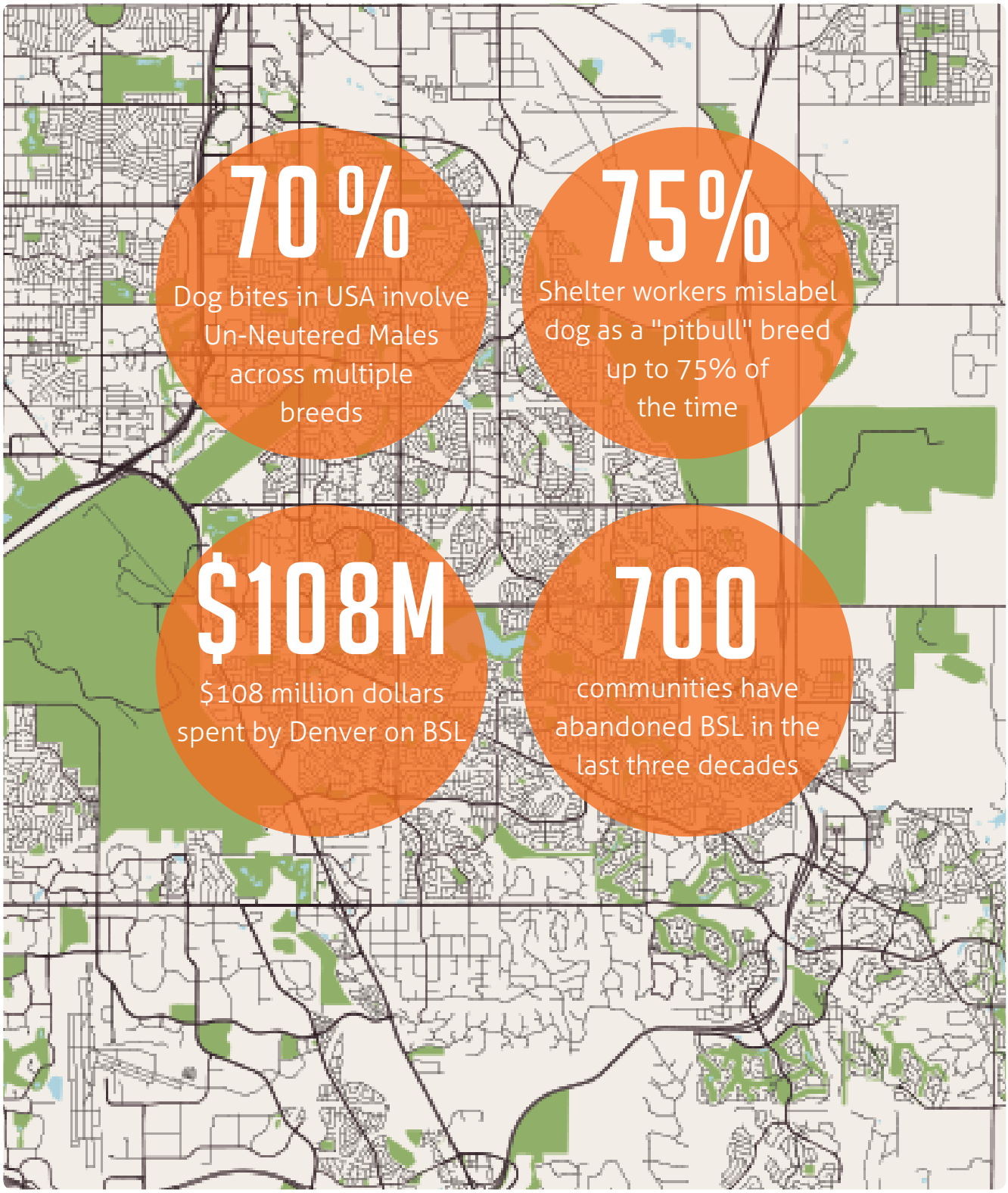
Providing training and responsible care is key to addressing aggressive behavior in all dog breeds. By criminalizing certain breeds, we only fuel a cycle of aggression, as it prevents owners from accessing responsible training opportunities

IT PREVENTS CRUCIAL SOCIALIZATION

All dogs are territorial. Like humans, all dogs feel happiness, sadness, anger, fear, boredom, anxiety and etc. We train our children not to bite, not to hit, to share, and to obey the law. Dogs need the same attention.

IT PREVENTS ACCESS TO LIABILITY INSURANCE

By criminalizing an entire subset of dog breeds, we give the insurance companies fuel to deny claims while preventing any mechanism for redress in cases where an incident may have involved a "pit bull".


70%
Dog bites in USA involve Un-Neutered Males across multiple breeds
75%
Shelter workers mislabel dog as a "pitbull" breed up to 75% of the time
$108M
$108 million dollars spent by Denver on BSL
700
communities have abandoned BSL in the last three decades

recent studies indicate that shelter workers misidentify dogs as "pitbull" 33% - 75% of the time, leading to inflated stats that were already inflated by the number of breeds considered "pitbull".

THE RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS

TRAINING

The number one way to prevent dog attacks is by training. By criminalizing breeds, you eliminate their access to training, propogating irresponsible ownership.

SOCIALIZATION

All dogs, regardless of breed, are territorial and need to be socialized. BSL creates a stigma that propogates fearful reactions to the many breeds considered "pitbull".

LICENSING

Licensing can help promote awareness of proper technique and care for large dog breeds for new owners that may be specific to breed or dog type.

INSURANCE

The ability to provide insurance for breeds considered "pit bull" can ensure that in the case that training fails, there is compensation available should incident occur.

RESPONSIBLE ORDINANCE SHOULD APPLY TO ALL DOGS

There are a host of issues endemic to communities who try to maintain breed-specific legislation. Some of these include challenges such as people not knowing they are rescuing a "pitbull" or prohibited breed, as rescues are not required to DNA test dogs they adopt or place in homes, with no recourse from those who adopt these dogs. Those who move to town, find new jobs here, come here from neighborhing cities where the breeds are not prohibited face an undue burden of hiding their dogs for fear they may be criminally liable simply because their dog has 50% of a specific bloodline. Some issues have come as a result of a family member leaving care of their dogs to others when they became terminally ill or deceased, forcing the inheritors to choose between destroying the dog, or being non-compliant with a law that punishes a breed regardless of whether or not there was an incident. There have been reports of neighbors using dog breeds as ammunition in their personal feuds to punish each other, or children having their family pet destroyed simply because it got loose.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT BREED-SPECIFIC LAWS MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER

According the the ASPCA, " There is no evidence that breed-specific laws make communities safer for people or companion animals. Following a thorough study of human fatalities resulting from dog bites, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) decided to strongly oppose BSL. The CDC cited, among other problems, the inaccuracy of dog bite data and the difficulty in identifying dog breeds (especially true of mixed-breed dogs). Breed-specific laws are also costly and difficult to enforce.[1]"

"Public Safety Suffers. Breed-specific laws have a tendency to compromise rather than enhance public safety. When animal control resources are used to regulate or ban a certain breed, the focus is shifted away from effective enforcement of laws that have the best chances of making communities safer: dog license laws, leash laws, anti-animal fighting laws, anti-tethering laws, laws facilitating spaying and neutering and laws that require all owners to control their dogs, regardless of breed.[2]"

OF ALL PET OWNERS
consider their pet to be "members of the family"[3]
95%

ANNUAL SPENT ON PETS
in the United states of america every year.
$61 BILLION

5 MILLION PITBULLS
In the United States of America, making them a top 10 breed.[4]
5 MILLION

1 MILLION PITBULLS
Are killed per year, or 2,800 per day in the United States.[5]
1 MILLION

EUTHANASIA RATE
With some groups claiming it can be as high as 93%.[6]
40%

WE CAUSED THIS PROBLEM - KILLING THEM ALL WON'T FIX IT.

BSL perpetuates the cycle of irresponsible owners failing to neuter or spay their breeds. Those who end up with them are often afraid to take them to the vet for routine medical care on fear of being "turned in".

- Without access to veterinary care, these breeds fall victim to inflated stats by preventing basic neutering and spaying.
- Without access to training, these breeds are denied the same opportunities as other breeds for basic training, perpetuating the cycle of inflated stats.
- Without access to basic socialization, many pits are deprived of the basic socialization that all dogs receive, perpetuating the cycle of inflated stats.

[1] https://www.animalsheltering.org/sites/default/files/documents/repealing-breed-specific-legislation.pdf

"Like racial profiling for dogs, BSL unfairly penalizes responsible dog owners without holding owners of truly dangerous dogs accountable. This is why the American Kennel Club, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Animal Control Association, the American Bar Association, and a host of other respected national organizations oppose BSL

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"A 2013 study of how shelter employees identify dog breeds found that 41% of shelter employees in areas with breed-specific legislation (BSL) indicated that they would knowingly misidentify a dog if he looked like he might be a restricted breed, presumably to increase his chance of adoption.

"Breed-specific legislation (BSL), also called breed-discriminatory legislation (BDL), affecting pit bull terriers, is ineffective at keeping communities safe because such laws target the wrong thing and ignore the real issue.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

"Dog experts and researchers – along with just about every reputable humane organization, from The HSUS to the ASPCA to the American Veterinary Medical Association – have long rejected the idea that breed specific legislation works in preventing dog bites or other dangerous encounters with dogs.

ABA AMERICANBARASSOCIATION

"ABA urges repeal of all breed-specific laws... In addition to urging repeal of all breed specific regulations, ABA endorses "breed-neutral dangerous dog/reckless owner laws that ensure due process protections for owners, encourage responsible pet ownership and focus on the behavior of both individual dog owner and dogs.

ASPCA ASPCA.ORG WE ARE THEIR VOICE.®

"ASPCA advocates the implementation of a community dog bite prevention program encompassing media and educational outreach in conjunction with the enactment, and vigorous enforcement, of breed-neutral laws that focus on the irresponsible and dangerous behavior of individual guardians and their dogs.

AVMA American Veterinary Medical Association

"The AVMA is opposed to BSL - The issue of dangerous dogs, dog bites and public safety is a complex one. Any dog can bite, regardless of its breed. It is the dog's individual history, behavior, general size, number of dogs involved, and the vulnerability of the person bitten that determines the likelihood of biting and whether a dog will cause a serious bite injury.

DOES BSL REDUCE DOG BITES? THE MATH SAYS "NO".

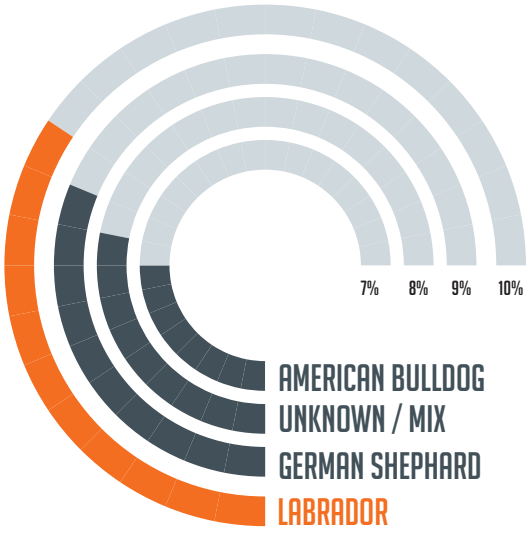
FROM THE NATIONAL CANINE RESEARCH COUNCIL

BSL has never succeeded in reducing dog bite related injuries at any point.

An evidence-based analysis published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association explains one reason that BSL could not be expected to work even if particular breeds could be identified as high risk. The authors calculated the absurdly large numbers of dogs of targeted breeds who would have to be completely removed from a community in order to prevent even one serious dog bite-related injury.

For example, in order to prevent a single hospitalization resulting from a dog bite, the authors calculate that a city or town would have to remove more than 100,000 dogs of a targeted group. To prevent a second hospitalization, double that number.

DENVER ATTACKS BY BREED IN 2019



Attacks in Denver 2019 by Breed as reported in Westword, February 2020 by Michael Roberts.

700 CITIES HAVE REPEALED BSL LAWS

With almost no new cities enacting new BSL laws. And we now have the data to determine what will happen when Aurora changes it's language to include all breeds: nothing of any statistical significance.

NO CITY HAS CREATED NEW BSL LAWS

While 700 cities and municipalities around the world removed BSL, no new cities in the United States that we could find has enacted new BSL laws. This indicates that the laws were a reaction to a growing fad of irresponsible dog owners and media sensationalism propogating fear.

CHANGING BREED POPULARITY MEANS AURORA WILL NOT BE READY FOR THE NEXT AGGRESSIVE BREED.

As the city ordinance specifically states the breeds that are prohibited, there is no mechanism within the ordinance for Aurora to process or manage new breeds and aggressive bloodlines within the same policy as "pitbull" breeds. Blanket "dangerous dog' legislation would give the city the authority to treat all aggresive dogs similarly, generate revenue through licensing, and while protect the community by allowing all breeds to be insured. Changing breed popularity will become an issue in the near future for Aurora. As a study from the AVMA states: "The prevalence of particular dog breeds can also change rapidly over time, often influenced by distinct peaks of popularity for specific breeds. It seems that increased popularity is sometimes followed by increases in bite reports in some large breeds. For example there was a distinct peak in American Kennel Club registration of Rottweilers between 1990 and 1995, and they come at the top of the list of 'biting breeds' for the first time in studies of bites causing hospitalization in the late 90s and early 2000s. While it must be noted that other fad breeds such as Dalmatians and Irish setters do not seem to make similar appearances, any estimate of breed-based risk must take into account the prevalence of the breed in the population at the time and place of serious biting events."

"PITBULL" IS A BLANKET TERM FOR MORE THAN NOW 20 BREEDS, WITH NEW BREEDS AND BLOODLINES BEING CONSTANTLY DEVELOPED.

- American Pit Bull Terrier
- American Staffordshire Terrier
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier
- American Bully
- Gator Pit Bull
- Brindle Pit Bull
- Grey Line Pit
- American Bulldog
- Cane Corse
- Bandog
- Valley Bulldog
- Gotti Pit
- Blue Fawn
- Ablepaws Pit
- Banter Bulldogge
- Brittish Staffodshire
- Blue Nosed Pit Bull
- Red Nosed Pit Bull
- Benmar American
- Bullyson American
- Colby Pit

EASY TO TRAIN

There is a growing popularity within police forced to train "pitbull's" as police dogs. "Pitbull" breeds have been found to be extremely well-disciplined when trained and currently serve as officers in cities across the World.

BSL IS AT ODDS WITH FEDERAL STATUTE AND ADA COMPLIANCE.

There are legal challenges to the implementation and mechanism of breed-specific ordinance and how it is affected by statements of comliance and procedure from federal organizations including the Department of Justice, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The issue stems from the growing popularity of "pit" breeds as service dogs. In the case of service dogs in aurora, questions remain over whether these questions of ADA compliance would supercede a municipal ordinance with no standard for testing or benchmarks to determine the ancestry. This is an important factor in determining how a challenge to the ordinance would be heard - there are multiple studies calling visual identification into question as rescue workers have been known to visually misidentify "pitbull" breeds up to 72% of the time.

From the Humane Society Website[1]:
" HUD recognizes that breed is an irrelevant factor to ensu-ring the general public health and safety of a housing com-munity by asserting that all breeds of domestic dogs can be
assistance animals regardless of any state or local breed bans and states: "Breed, size, and weight limitations may not be applied to an assistance animal. A determination that an assistance animal poses a direct threat of harm to others or would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others must be based on an individua-lized assessment that relies on objective evidence about the specific animal's actual conduct—not on mere speculation or fear about the types of harm or damage an animal may cause and not on evidence about harm or damage that other animals have caused."

" Similarly, the DOJ requires that places of public accommodation grant service dogs access to the premises regardless of breed: "Mu-nicipalities that prohibit specific breeds of dogs must make an ex-ception for a service animal of a prohibited breed, unless the dog poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Under the "direct threat" provisions of the ADA, local jurisdictions need to de-termine, on a case-by-case basis, whether a particular service animal can be excluded based on that particular animal's actual behavior or history, but they may not exclude a service animal because of fears or generalizations about how an animal or breed might behave."

{1}https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/breed-specific-legislation

ESTABLISHING A STRONG DANGEROUS DOG ORDINANCE THAT APPLIES TO ALL BREEDS IS NOT COUNTERACTING THE WILL OF THE VOTERS. THE CITIZENS OF AURORA WANT COMPREHENSIVE DANGEROUS DOG ORDINANCE AND SERVICE FOR ALL BREEDS.

DISINFORMATION AND POOR PUBLIC AWARENESS

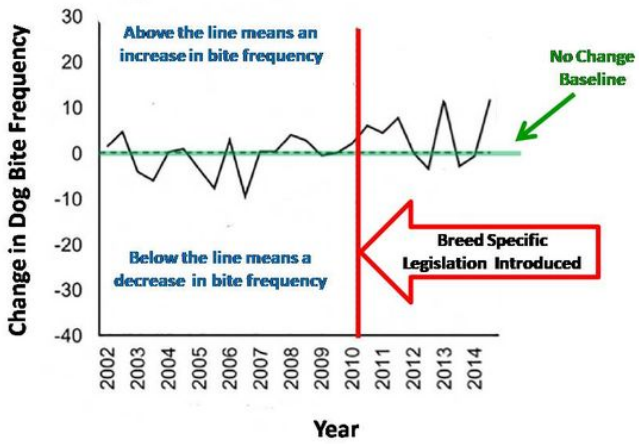
While the vast majority or veterinarians, dog trainers, dog rescues, volunteer groups, civic organizations, and animal rights groups all support removing BSL, some cities are finding themselves victim to organizations which cherry-pick stats and push fear and anecdotal examples to demonize a breed as the culprit of dog aggression.

This is not difficult to do, as "pitbull" breeds are large dogs. Like German Shephards, Dobermans, and Rottweilers, they are intimidating, as they are large dogs. The stigma placed on "pitbulls" as the current top disparaged breed works to reinforce those issues as the community and general public look to government regulation and ordinance as a benchmark for establishing their own opinions and prejudices in many cases. Responsible legislation requires that some matters of procedure that are sensitive to manipulation in the public discourse be decided through code and ordinance. Since the public does not have a mechanism to understand the complexities of breeding, blooodlines, DNA testing standardization, and the fallability of visual identification among rescue workers, the law will be stuck in 2004. forever.

FORTUNATELY THERE IS A SIMPLE ANSWER TO THIS ISSUE.

Make the same dangerous dog legislation that applies weighted towards some breeds within the "pitbull" sub-species of dog applicaple to all breeds of dog.

If you ask the public: "Do you think dangerous dog legislation should apply to all dogs regardless of breed", you will find the public almost unanimously supporting it as common-sense legislation.



BSL SIMPLY DOESN'T WORK.

So how do we fix it without alienating voters? Simple - we move forward on the reclassification of "pitbull" to "dangerous dogs. It doesn't mean we are legalizing "Pitbulls", it simply means we are engaging in common sense dangerous dog ordinance that applies to all dogs.

WHAT WE WILL DO IN RETURN

"We" are trainers, rescue workers, business owners, dog owners, activists and more. If this goes to ballot, we are confident that our public awareness campaigns and civic involvement will spread awareness of the issue and convince the voters that this arcane artifact popularized in the late 90's is antiquated policy.

However, we propose that all can save time and money by empowering Aurora Animal Services to enforce ordinance equally on all dogs as was discussed with the community in 2019.

If we take this approach, then our coalition of organizations will engage on public safety initiatives in Aurora, making sure that dog owners, regardless of breed, are educated and informed on Responsible dog ownership and etiquette.

END AURORA BSL
ENDAURORABSL.ORG

STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST BSL!

We are a coalition of organizations, rescues, veterinarians, trainers, businesses, and concerned citizens who would like to see Aurora move towards a more modern and comprehensive dangerous dog ordinance. We feel it is important to establish common-sense legislation for a new era of breeding and human/canine companionship. We recognize that to most families, their dogs are a part of their family, and we would like to encourage responsible stewardship for the canine's that have been domesticated by humans,

NATIONAL DOG RESCUE NETOWRK

Dog rescue support and community awareness.

END AURORA BSL

Dedicated to common-sense dog ordinance in Aurora.

COLORADO LIASON ANIMAL WELFARE ALLIANCE

Broud mandate serving the interest of a range of Animal welfare issues

MODULAR WORKSHOP

Data services, website development, and graphic design for non-profits.

REPEAL BSL

Commited to ending BSL

BINA PHOTOGRAPHY

Dog and animal companion photography in Aurora, CO

PITBULL INFO

Educating on REAL pitbull stats and information.

AMORPHUS BULLY CAMP

AMERICAN BULLY KENNEL CLUB

official registry worldwide for the American Bully.