



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB®

June 27, 2012

The Honorable John P. Romano  
Mayor, Village of Ballston Spa  
66 Front Street  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

**Re: AKC & Local Residents Oppose Animal Limit Law Proposal**

Dear Mayor Romano and Members of the Village Board:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) writes on behalf of our local dog clubs and the numerous responsible dog owners in Ballston Spa to express our concerns with the draft ordinance that would limit animal ownership. We respectfully ask that you oppose this proposal and instead focus on general nuisance and animal control laws that urge all dog owners to be accountable for their pets, regardless of how many they own.

Laws that limit animal ownership are ineffective, arbitrary, and do not address the underlying issue of responsible dog ownership. ***Limiting the number of animals a person may own will not automatically make them a better owner.*** Our experience and that of many communities across the country has demonstrated that strong enforcement of nuisance, leash, and other general animal control laws prove more effective in addressing animal control concerns. I have attached a brief document outlining the specific problems with ownership limits and suggestions for more effective alternatives.

Responsible dog owners have a significant impact on the Ballston Spa economy. In just the past 2 years alone, over two dozen separate dog events and field trials were held in Ballston Spa, in which over 8,200 dogs participated. A significant number of local businesses benefit from these events each year, in addition to the thousands of dollars spent annually by village dog owners on basic dog care, grooming, veterinarian visits, and other items. **This proposal sends the clear message that responsible dog owners who reside in the village or attend dog events and stay with residents of Ballston Spa are not welcome in your village.** Instead of limiting the ownership rights of responsible dog owners, focusing efforts on general animal control enforcement will make a strong statement that you support and appreciate the responsible dog owners who make such a positive contribution to the village.

The American Kennel Club and your local responsible dog owners encourage you to reject the proposal to limit dog ownership and instead focus on those owners who are truly a problem in the community. We regularly work with communities like yours to help develop public education programs and legislation to effectively address your concerns without infringing on the rights of responsible dog owners. Please do not hesitate to contact us at 919-816-3720 if we can be of assistance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheila Goffe  
Government Relations Director

Cc: Ballston Spa Village Board

JLC