

Georgia Senator Reintroduces Dogfighting Bill

Legislation would make it a felony to participate in a fight, and to sell or train fighting dogs.

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A Georgia state senator has reintroduced a bill that would make it a felony to fight dogs or train them for fighting.

Republican Sen. Chip Rogers proposed similar legislation in 2006, but it was derailed over concerns about an anti-cockfighting amendment, and language that some lawmakers said would limit the training of hunting dogs.

But on Jan. 9, 2007, Rogers introduced a streamlined version of the bill, aimed only at dogfighting.

“This is a big-time criminal enterprise,” Rogers said in introducing the bill. “There’s big-time money involved, there are often drugs involved and of course, there are these animals that are destroyed.”

Dogfighting is illegal in Georgia, but current law allows only people caught in the act – and not fight attendees – to be charged with misdemeanor animal cruelty.

Rogers’ bill, SB 16, would make it a felony to host or participate in a dogfight, to bet on one, or to sell or train fighting dogs. A first offense would bring a prison term of up to five years, a \$5,000 fine, or both.

Someone convicted more than once could face 10 years in prison, a fine of \$15,000, or both. The bill also would make it a misdemeanor to attend a dogfight, with a penalty of up to a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

The proposed legislation can be read in its entirety at the Georgia General Assembly website:
http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2007_08/fulltext/sb16.htm