

## Ohio May Redefine 'Vicious Dog'

**Lawmaker seeks to take out "pit bulls" from state's statutory definition.**

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An Ohio lawmaker wants to get pit bulls off the state's definition of "vicious dog" in state law.

Rep. Barbara Sears, R-Sylvania, introduced House Bill 79, which strikes "pit bull" from Ohio's statutory definition of dangerous dogs. As it reads now, the law states that if a dog "belongs to a breed that is commonly known as a pit bull dog" then it's automatically deemed vicious and dangerous and the owner must submit reports to the board of health and county dog warden whenever there is a transfer of ownership.

A vicious dog, as defined in the state law, has killed or seriously injured a person, or another dog, without provocation. A vicious dog doesn't include a police dog that has killed or injured any person while the dog is being used to help law enforcement officers perform their duties.

HB 79, in addition to removing pit bulls from the state's definition of a vicious dog, would also eliminate the following language: "The ownership, keeping, or harboring of such a breed of dog shall be prima facie evidence of the ownership, keeping, or harboring of a vicious dog."

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