



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB<sup>SM</sup>

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Government Relations  
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New England

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Pinny Beebe-Center, Senate Chair  
The Honorable Suzanne Salisbury, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
100 State House Station, Cross Building, Room 436  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**RE: Support LD 1234, Provide Reimbursement for Health Care Expenses of Retired State Police Law Enforcement Dogs**

Dear Chair Beebe-Center, Chair Salisbury, and Members of the Joint Committee:

Founded in 1884, the American Kennel Club (AKC) is a not-for-profit organization that is recognized as a trusted expert in canine health, breeding, and training. We advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion and promote the ideals of responsible dog ownership. We represent over 5,000 dog clubs nationally, including 30 in Maine, which represent thousands of dog owners. In 2021, AKC licensed and sanctioned 111 events in Maine where more than 9,000 dogs participated. Surveys estimate that exhibitors spend \$863 per show weekend, many of whom travel into Maine to participate.

LD 1234 would require the Department of Public Safety to reimburse authorized handlers of retired law enforcement dogs that were used in service by the State Police up to \$5,000 per year for health care expenses of their dogs. AKC values the contribution that these dogs make to national security and the extraordinary role that these dogs play in protecting the peace and security of individuals, communities, and nations. We honor the breeders, trainers, and handlers of these working dogs in order to provide a variety of valuable services such as handicapped assistance; drug, bomb, and arson detection; and tracking to locate missing persons or fugitives. Programs such as [AKC's Detection Dog Taskforce](#) support breeding programs to ensure that sufficient high quality domestically-bred dogs are available to ensure public safety and national security.

Providing veterinary medical care to assure the wellbeing of these retired dogs is a high AKC priority and AKC strongly supports LD 1234. We urge the committee to pass LD 1234. If I can be of any further assistance, I can be reached at [stacey.ober@akc.org](mailto:stacey.ober@akc.org) or (919) 816-3348. Thank you.

Regards,

Government Relations Regional Manager, New England

Cc: The Honorable Allison Hepler, Sponsor LD 1234  
Gary Anderson, President, Federation of Maine Dog Clubs