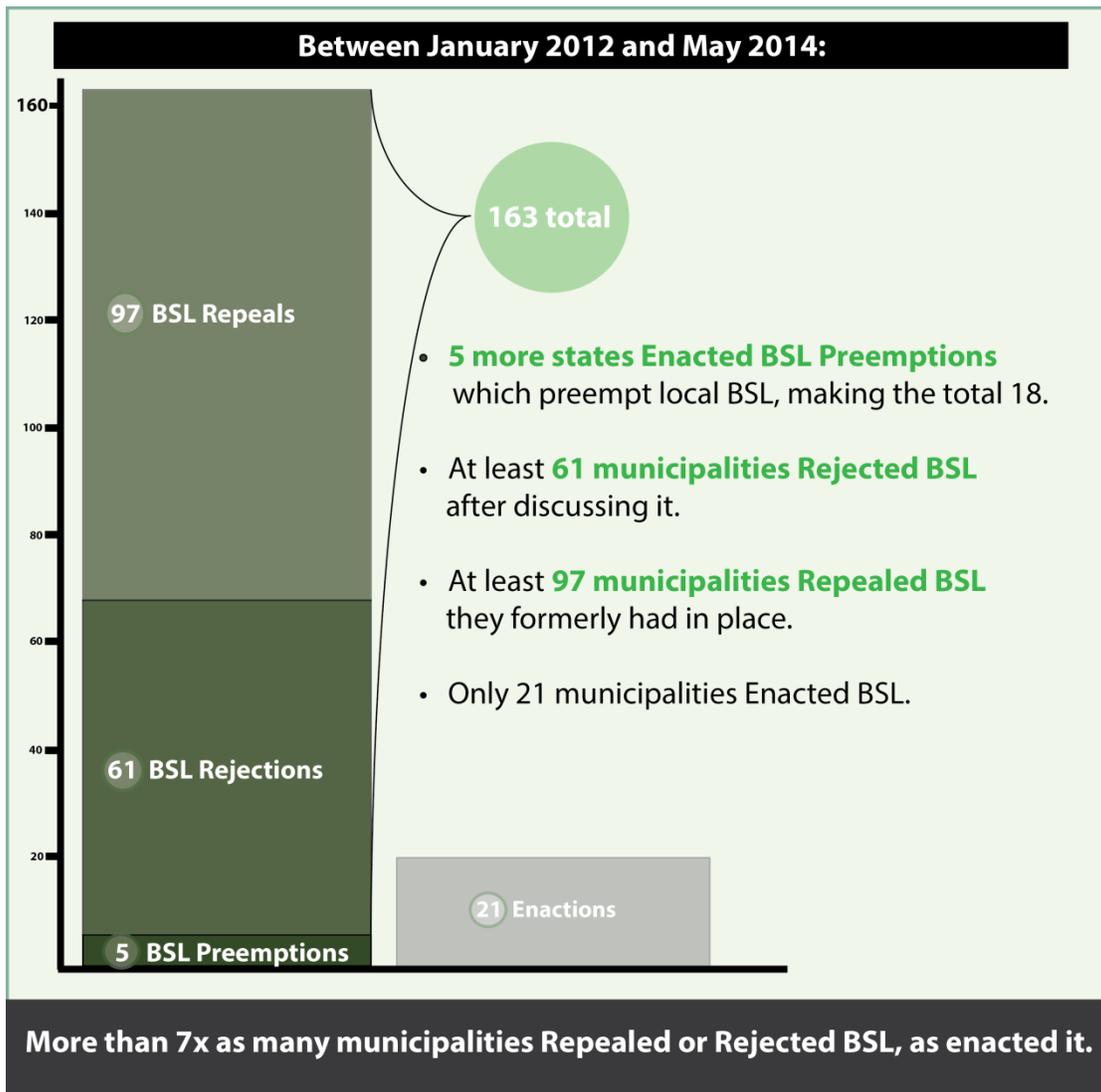


BREED-SPECIFIC LEGISLATION IS ON THE DECLINE

5 MORE STATES NO LONGER ALLOW BSL & MORE THAN 7X AS MANY U.S. MUNICIPALITIES REPEALED OR REJECTED PROPOSED BSL, THAN ENACTED BETWEEN: JANUARY 2012-MAY 2014

The national trend is moving steadily away from breed-specific legislation (BSL) and toward breed neutral laws that hold all owners equally accountable for the humane care, custody, and control of their dogs. The list of states that are considering and passing legislation to preempt municipalities from passing BSL continues to grow.

BSL is a discriminatory law or ordinance that prohibits or restricts the keeping of dogs of specific breeds, dogs presumed to be specific breeds, mixes of specific breeds, and/or dogs presumed to be mixes of specific breeds.¹



The trend reflects a growing understanding that regulating dogs on the basis of breed or physical description does not reduce dog bites.^{2,3} An evidence-based analysis published in 2010 offers one explanation for the failure of BSL: absurdly large numbers of targeted breeds would have to be completely removed from a community in order to prevent even one serious dog-bite related injury.⁴ Most importantly, studies continue to show that one kind of dog is no more likely to threaten or bite a human being than another.^{5,6,7} The American Bar Association has urged the repeal of all BSL.⁸ The White House also opposes BSL and released a statement saying, “research shows that bans on certain types of dogs are largely ineffective and often a waste of public resources.”⁹ No major national organizations endorse BSL, including the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior, the Centers for Disease Control, the Humane Society of the United States, the National Animal Control Association, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and Best Friends Animal Society. The tide has turned against BSL and communities are implementing policies that hold all dog owners responsible for the humane care, custody, and control of their dogs, regardless of breed or appearance. Building safer and more humane communities requires multifactorial approaches¹⁰ focusing on improved ownership and husbandry practices, better understanding of dog behavior, education of parents and children regarding safety around dogs^{11,12,13,14}, and consistent enforcement¹⁵ of dangerous dog/reckless owner ordinances in communities.

SOURCES and NOTES

1. The most drastic form of BSL is a complete ban, but BSL also includes any laws that impose separate requirements or limitations on dogs and dog owners, including but not limited to: mandatory spay/neuter, muzzling requirements, liability insurance requirements, special licensing and additional fees, mandatory microchipping or tattoos, owner / walker age requirements, property posting requirements, confinement and leash requirements, breed-specific pet limits, sale or transfer notification requirements, restrictions on access to certain public spaces with the dog [e.g.: public parks; school grounds], required town-issued items [e.g.: fluorescent collar; vest], training requirements, and requirement that photos of the dog and/or owner be kept on town file. BSL, in any form, results in the destruction of many pet dogs. For more information please see the National Canine Research Council Website. To stay up-to-date with BSL, please see the Animal Farm Foundation BSL Map: <http://www.animalfarmfoundation.org/pages/BSL-Map>
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