



ANIMAL FARM FOUNDATION'S TALKING POINTS FOR THE MAJORITY PROJECT

The following are effective talking points for Animal Farm Foundation's The Majority Project. The Majority Project is a growing collection of hundreds of photos representing the majority of "pit bull" dog owners: valued members of our communities.

Please use our The Majority Project photo handout (available for free on our website) as a visual aid to go along with the following talking points:

- "Pit bull" dog owners are no different than other dog owners; the overwhelming majority love and care for their pets in a responsible manner, which includes proper maintenance, control, and containment of their dogs.
- There are millions of "pit bull" dog owners across the United States who live peacefully and unremarkably with their family pets. They are your neighbors, family, friends, public servants, and valued members of the community. They are not the exception; they are the rule.
- A very small minority of people who own dogs – including, but not limited to "pit bull" dogs – are reckless owners, yet those few individuals account for a disproportionate amount of reckless behavior. These are the individuals which effective laws must focus on if we want safe communities.
- All of us, including "pit bull" dog owners, want to be protected from the reckless few who disregard the laws that govern responsible pet ownership. Discriminating against dog owners because of what their dog looks like will never make for a safer community. Holding reckless owners accountable will.
- Reckless owners cannot be correlated with any particular breed or type of dog; the only factor reckless dog owners have in common is their problematic behavior resulting from a disregard for public safety and animal welfare.
- Every citizen deserves to be protected from ALL reckless dog owners, not just reckless owners with the targeted breeds of dogs. Everyone needs to be held equally accountable.

- We're all on the same team when it comes to the issue of community safety. We all want to be safe and want to work together towards our common goal.
- When you discriminate against dogs, you're discriminating against people. We cannot allow discrimination or stereotyping to stand in the way of fair, effective laws for our community. Great communities don't discriminate.
- Effective policies put the focus on the dog owners, not the dogs. Dogs do not exist out of the context of their owners. We must hold ALL owners equally accountable for their actions and reckless behavior – no matter what their dogs look like.
- By treating all dogs as individuals and empowering pet owners to be responsible, we can create communities that are safe. Creating and enforcing non-discriminatory Responsible Pet Ownership laws is the most effective path to building safe, humane communities.
- Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) will not help us achieve our common goal: community safety. BSL has never been effective in reducing dog bites and enhancing public safety. BSL will not have the results that were promised to constituents and wastes taxpayer dollars.
- BSL is expensive, time-consuming, and nearly impossible to enforce. It takes resources away from protecting the community from truly dangerous animals, including dangerous dogs not belonging to the targeted breeds.
- The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) exhaustive review of dog bite studies conducted in North America and elsewhere has concluded that separate regulation of "pit bull" dogs is not a basis for dog bite prevention. The AVMA Task Force recommends breed-neutral laws, combined with a well-planned proactive community approach. Creating and enforcing nondiscriminatory Responsible Pet Ownership laws is the most effective path to building safe, humane communities.
- The experts agree that BSL doesn't work. Organizations that oppose breed specific legislation include The American Bar Association, The White House, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The Humane Society of the United States, The Association of Pet Dog Trainers, and The American Kennel Club, among others.

The Majority Project can be found here:
<http://www.animalfarmfoundation.org/pages/Special-Projects-Majority>

Our eBook, *BSL Talking Points*, provides further research, sources, and tools to support your work. Our eBook, *Communications and Media*, provides tool to help you communicate about these issues effectively.

animalfarmfoundation.org

