

**January 11, 2021**

**Dr. Apryl Steele, President and CEO of the Denver Dumb Friends League provided the following statement to Aurora City Council in support of the repeal:**

“I commend you for showing up as leaders to address Aurora’s ban on pit bulls, and I understand the complexity introduced by repealing a ban that was enacted by council and subsequently voted on by citizens. As I have listened to your discourse on this topic, it occurs to me that what you are discussing and the decision you are making are two different things.

Some seem to think the decision is about whether pit bulls should exist in Aurora. The reality is that pit bulls already live in Aurora. Since the enactment of the pit bull ban, thousands of pit bulls that had been living in Aurora have been voluntarily relinquished to the Dumb Friends. Do not be fooled, pit bulls are living in Aurora right now.

Every council member is concerned about the safety of our community. This is an issue we take very seriously at the Dumb Friends League. This is exactly why it is vital to create a community where pit bull puppies can be socialized without fear of having them confiscated. **This is also why allowing your citizens to adopt a pit bull from an organization that has several full-time behavior experts evaluating the animal prior to making it available, rather than obtaining it from underground resources motivated by profit, is imperative.** The fear of bringing the dog out in public, sourcing pit bulls from unscreened dog dealers, and not providing them with veterinary care or training all increase risks to your citizens.

As a veterinarian and as the CEO of the Dumb Friends League, I strongly support well-written, appropriately enforced dangerous dog ordinances. Aurora has laid this groundwork well. Holding owners accountable for the behavior of their dog is the best way to make Aurora as safe as possible.

Why does this change need to be made now? Too many families have been broken up because their family dog is a banned breed. Not because the dog showed any sign of aggression. Not because the dog injured any other animal or person. These are dogs that sleep on their owner’s beds, dogs who are providing essential companionship during a time of extreme isolation and critical mental health challenges. For many, a relationship with a pet is their only reason to engage with the world right now. To remove this source of comfort in this extreme time is indefensible

A majority of city councilmembers have shown impressive leadership around this issue. Please vote to repeal the pit bull ban so that your community can be safer, and families can remain whole.”

Audra Streetman, “[Aurora City Council Repeals Pit Bull Ban](#),” CBS Denver, January 11, 2021 (denver.cbslocal.com)

**March 10, 2021**

**Denver Dumb Friends League statement after a stray pit bull that passed a SAFER test inflicted a Level 5 bite to child's face; a Level 6 bite is a fatality:**

“All dogs have the potential to bite, and any aggressive dog should be managed regardless of its breed. The repeal has not been in effect long enough to have had the positive impact of socialization and behavior support that is expected to create a safer community.”

Shawn Chitnis, “[‘It Breaks My Heart’: Aurora Council Member Reacts To Boy Injured In Dog Attack By Previously Banned Breed](#),” CBS Denver, March 10, 2021 (denver.cbslocal.com)