



TEXAS HUMANE  
LEGISLATION  
NETWORK®





## **Helping Texas Animals Through Legislation and Education**

- **Intro to THLN and THN**
- **The Texas Legislature**
- **The 2021 Legislative Session**
- **The 2023 Legislative Session**
- **What Can You Do to Help Texas Animals?**





## Introduction to THLN and THN

# Introduction to THLN

- First statewide 501c4 for animals in the country
- 45 year old organization
- Our mission is to promote the humane treatment of animals through legislation, education and advocacy
- Operated solely by volunteers for 35 years
- Chapters throughout the state

CHAINS ARE  
FOR TRUCKS,  
NOT PUPS.



# Why Legislation Matters



- Loco was a 8 month-old pup stolen from his family's backyard, found days later missing both eyes.
- Texas law at the time provided only misdemeanor charges with minor consequences.
- Loco put a face to the weak animal cruelty laws that existed in Texas at that time.
- Animal abusers are now subject to state felony charges, up to 2 years imprisonment, and can face up to a \$10,000 fine.

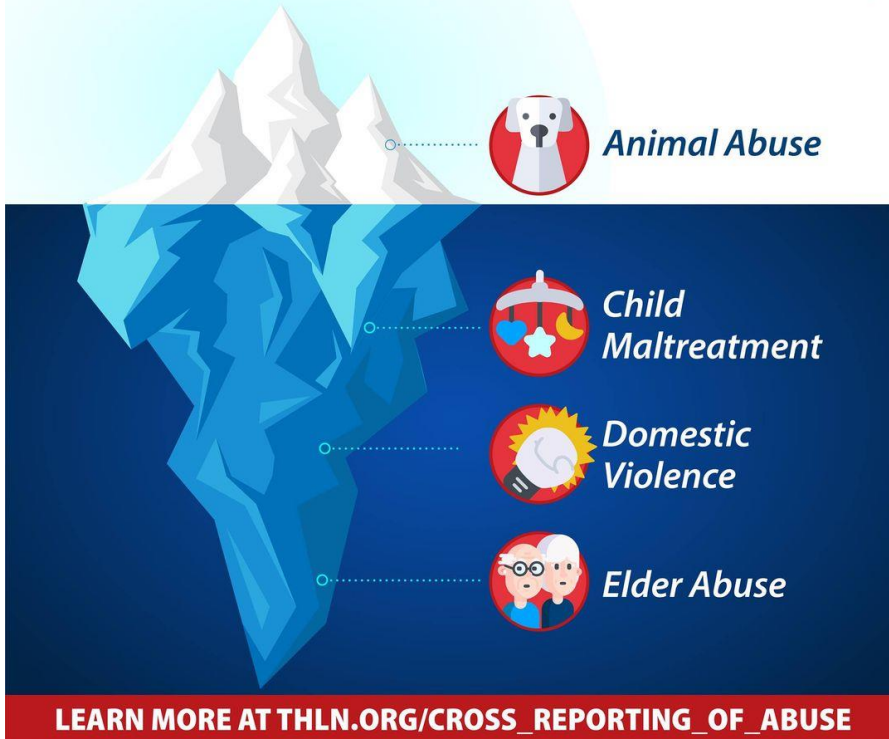


# Why should animal cruelty be taken seriously...



## ANIMAL ABUSE:

*It's the Tip of the Iceberg*



- Identifies people engaging in other crimes.
- Exposes family violence.
- Indicator that children at risk to themselves and to others.
- Witnesses or victims more comfortable talking about it.

“Animal cruelty is more than just a legal issue. It’s a community issue. If you improve animal welfare in a community, you improve public safety for everyone.”

-- Former Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

LEARN MORE AT [THLN.ORG/CROSS\\_REPORTING\\_OF\\_ABUSE](http://THLN.ORG/CROSS_REPORTING_OF_ABUSE)

# THLN Victories – Animal Friendly License Plate

## ANIMAL FRIENDLY LICENSE PLATES



In 1997, **THLN** passed H.B. 3250, which created an “animal-friendly” fund for the state through the sale of specialty license plates. We continually monitor this fund each legislative session to ensure that the money continues to be used for it’s intended purpose.

Thanks to Texas drivers’ support of this bill, as of December 2019:



**\$6,188,076**

has been awarded to cover low-cost spays and neuters



**105,001**

dogs and cats in Texas have been sterilized



Additionally, **all of these animals are seen by a veterinarian**, increasing the probability that appropriate vaccinations will be administered and **preventing the spread of deadly diseases.**

**ORDER YOUR ANIMAL FRIENDLY LICENSE PLATE TODAY**

Get your animal-friendly license plate **HERE**

Thanks largely to THLN, this law created a new “animal-friendly” fund through the sale of special motor vehicle license plates.



# THLN Victories Con't

## DOG FIGHTING ACT



THLN played a major role in passing this landmark act which outlawed dog fighting in Texas.

1983

### DFA INITIALLY PASSED

Outlaws dog fighting, promoting a dog fight, training dogs to fight, and attending a dog fight.

2007

### DFA AMENDMENT HB 916 PASSED

The Dog Fighting Penalty Enhancement Bill increased the punishment for dog fighting from a misdemeanor to a state jail felony, and increased the punishment for attending a dog fighting exhibition.

2009

### DFA AMENDMENT SB 554 PASSED

The Dog Fighting Classified as Organized Crime Bill allows dog fighting to be classified as organized crime and additionally allows for all property associated with dog fighting to be forfeited.

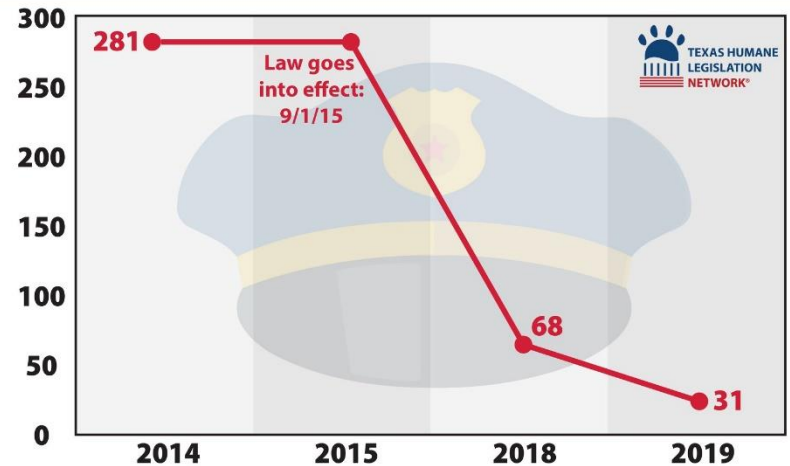
LEARN MORE AT [THLN.ORG/OUR-VICTORIES](http://THLN.ORG/OUR-VICTORIES)

## CANINE ENCOUNTER LAW



THLN passed a law in 2015 requiring a one-time training course for law enforcement officers to prepare them for a safe, non-confrontational outcome when encountering a dog. As a result of the Canine Encounter Law being passed, the number of dogs who have been reported shot by police has drastically lowered.

### NUMBER OF TX DOGS REPORTED SHOT BY POLICE



GIVE A GIFT AT [THLN.ORG/2019\\_HOLIDAY\\_DONATION](http://THLN.ORG/2019_HOLIDAY_DONATION)





# Texas Humane Network

# Intro to the Texas Humane Network

- Formed in 2020
- C3 – Mission: to promote the humane treatment of animals through education and training
- Humane Library
- Webinar Wednesdays
- Cross Reporting of Abuse Cards
- Working with ordinance revisions
- Upcoming ... Texas Animal Cruelty Handbook







**The Texas Legislature**





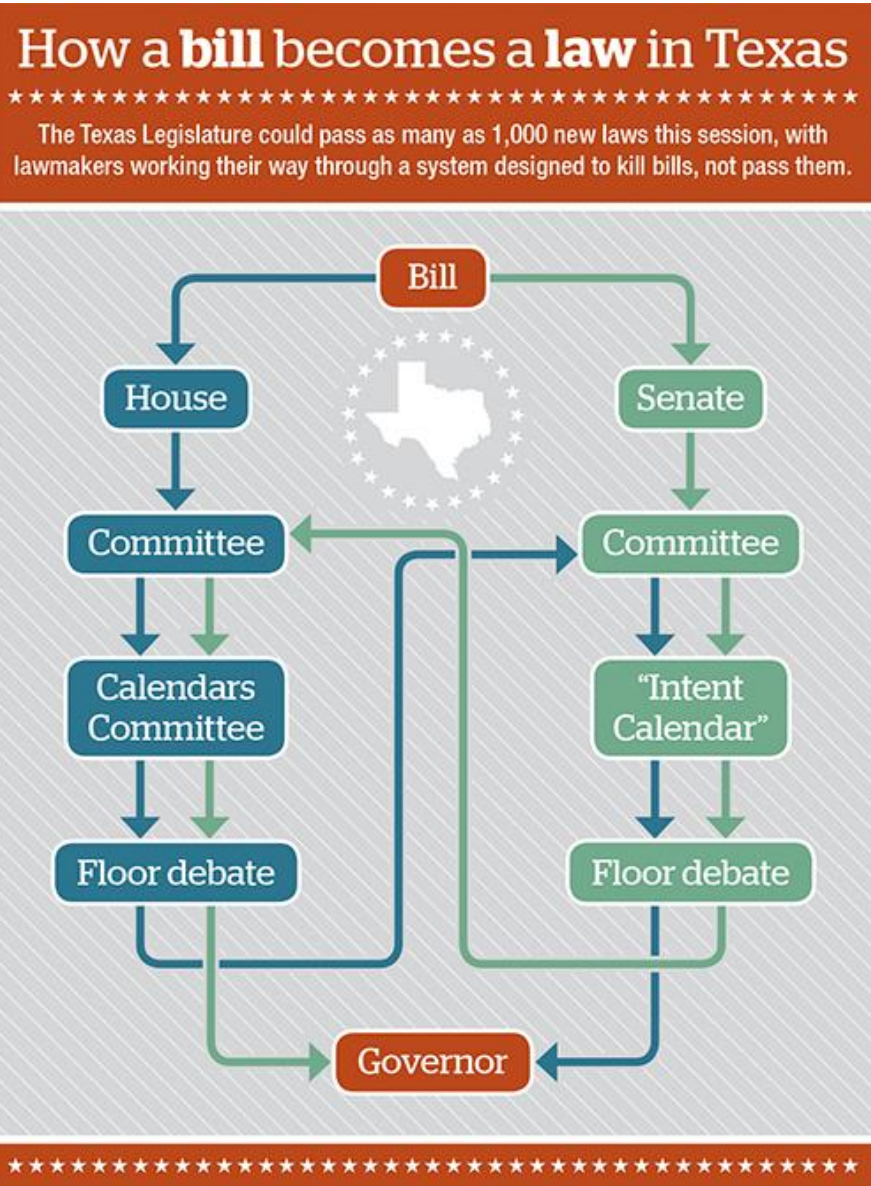
# **The Texas Legislature**

- **Convenes every other year in odd numbered years (2019, 2021, 2023)**
- **140 days in duration (20 weeks) – in reality, only 95+/- “workdays”**
  - **Governor has 20 days post-sine die to approve/veto bill**
  - **Special sessions**

***2021 House: 83 Rs and 67 Ds (150)***

***2021 Senate: 18 Rs and 13 Ds (31)***

# How a Bill Becomes Law in Texas



# The Texas Legislature in 2023

- **5 Senators + 25 House Members Retired = At least 30 new members**
- **January 10, 2023, First day of Regular Session**
- **May 29, 2023, Last day of Regular Session**
  - **Governor has 20 days post-sine die to approve/veto bill**
- **6927 bills filed in 2021–**
  - **1,181 passed to the Gov's Desk**







## Animal Issues are Bi-Partisan

**February 16, 2017:**  
Congressmen Roger Williams (R-Austin) and Marc Veasey (D-Fort Worth) introduced a bipartisan resolution to designate April 11th as '*National Pet Adoption Day*' and the month of April as '*National Pet Adoption Month*' to encourage pet adoption from local animal shelters and rescues.



**The 2021 Legislative Session**



# The Texas Licensed Breeders' Program



## BEFORE THE BREEDER PROGRAM





# **The Sunset Bill does not include the Texas Licensed Breeder Program**

- **The Texas Licensed Breeder Program was not included in the Sunset Bill that passed (HB 1560)**
- **Over 500 comments in 2020 asking to save the program**
- **More breeders need to come under the Program**



# Safe Outdoor Dogs Act (SB 474/HB 873)

HB 873 "SAFE OUTDOOR DOGS BILL"

**THANK YOU**

**AUTHORS**





**PRIMARY AUTHOR:  
NICOLE COLLIER**

**JOINT AUTHORS**

PACHECO   SHAHEEN   ORDAZ PEREZ   STUCKY

- 91 co-authors and sponsors
- 2 other bills brought
- Brought in 2015, 2017, 2019
- Defines adequate shelter
- Removes chains as a method of restraint
- Removes 24-hour warning so tickets are allowed at the scene
- Grants for cable tie outs

# Safe Outdoor Dogs Act (SB 474/HB 873)

## SB 474

- Introduced in January
- Referred to Criminal Justice Committee
- Reported favorably by committee in April
- Placed on intent calendar in April
- Passed Senate in April
- Sent to House
- Referred to Criminal Jurisprudence Committee
- Reported favorably in May
- Passed House after third reading in May
- Governor's desk in May

## HB 873

- Filed in December
- Referred to Criminal Jurisprudence Committee in March
- Reported favorably in March
- Sent to Calendars in April
- Placed on House Calendar in May
- Passed House in May



*LEGISLATION UPDATE*

**SB 474**

**THE SAFE OUTDOOR DOGS BILL**

***VETOED***



# Safe Outdoor Dogs Act **SAVED**



**The Safe Outdoor  
Dogs Act Goes Into Effect:  
A New Day For Texas Dogs**

# LEGISLATION UPDATE

**HB 1818  
PASSED IN THE HOUSE**



**NEXT STOP: THE SENATE**



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## HB 1071

COURTHOUSE DOGS	<u>AUTHOR:</u>  REP. HARRIS	<u>STATUS:</u>  GOING TO THE GOVERNOR	
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**Allows specially trained dogs to accompany vulnerable witnesses in court. A dog's calming presence can help get vital testimony into the record so that justice can be served.**

# HB 604 - Microchipping Bill



## **Sec. 823.004. MICROCHIP SCAN REQUIRED.**

**As soon as practicable after an animal is placed in the custody of an animal shelter or a releasing agency as defined by Section 828.001, the shelter or agency shall scan the animal to determine whether a microchip is implanted in the animal.**

# Removing Animals from Dangerous Situations (Possession Ban)

Relating to conditions of community supervision for defendants convicted of certain criminal offenses involving animals.

If a judge grants community supervision to a defendant convicted of an offense, the judge may:

- (1) Require the defendant to relinquish custody of any animals in the defendant's possession;
- (2) Prohibit the defendant from possessing or exercising control over any animals or residing in a household where animals are present; or
- (3) Require the defendant to participate in a psychological counseling or other appropriate treatment program for a period to be determined by the court.



# Sales Taxes for Adoptable Dogs

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**SB 197 - 11/16/20 - Nelson  
District 12**

- Relating to a sales and use tax exemption for animals adopted from or sold by nonprofit animal welfare organizations.





**The 2023 Legislative Session**

# 2023 Legislative Session: Humane Curriculum

- **Overarching problem:** The lack of formal education in Texas on how to treat and behave around animals has caused growing problems with dog bites, poor treatment of animals, and threatens the overall safety of Texans, especially children.
- **Solution:** Introducing a third-grade humane curriculum in Texas public schools would teach children how to properly interact with and treat animals to increase the safety and wellbeing of children, animals, and our families and communities.

## TEXAS HUMANE CURRICULUM

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BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

EMPATHY TOWARDS ANIMALS AND OTHERS

RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

PET CARE





# **2023 Legislative Session: Texas Licensed Breeder Program**

- 2021: House Bill 1560 preserved the *Texas Licensed Breeder Law* which regulates large-scale commercial dog and cat breeders. The breeder law came under Sunset review in 2020 and was saved.
- The *Texas Licensed Breeder Law* was created in 2011, per the passage of HB 1451, in response to routine seizures of hundreds of cruelly treated animals from large-scale dog-breeding operations or “puppy mills”.
- Proposed changes would include going from 11 to 5 breeding females and removing the proof of sales requirement.



# **2023 Legislative Session: Humane Pet Store Bill**

- 2021: HB 1818 would have required retail pet stores to source the cats and dogs they sell from animal control agencies, shelters, and rescue groups in counties with populations over 200,000.
- Several Texas cities have already switched to this humane model, including Austin, El Paso, The Colony, Euless, San Antonio, and Waco.

# Safe Outdoor Dog Roll Out: January 19, 2022

1. Oct. 19-Jan. 19: search for resources and prepare roll out
  2. Created one pagers, video, updated website, press release, and LTEs (c3 work)
  3. Relied on our partners and stakeholders to help with outreach
  4. Targeted outreach to LEOs, ACOs and Judges
  5. Community Meetings
- \*No mauling's, no LTEs criticizing**





# Safe Outdoor Dog Roll Out: January 19, 2022

## 1. Examples of Community Outreach:

- a. Marble Falls Shop Class
- b. Leander Eagle Scout Project

- 2. Lufkin: No More Tethering
- 3. Outlier: Johnson County
- 4. No cases, no LTEs criticizing
- 5. SPCAs feedback



# Big Cat Public Safety Act – HR 263

- Federal legislation would stop “breed & dump” cycle.
- Big Cats in private ownership continues to threaten public safety and first responders.
- HR 263 passed the US House but has not yet passed the US Senate.
- Last day of Federal Session is December 21, 2022.



A tiger cub was found in Dallas rapper Trapboy Freddy's house in Dallas.

# **2022 Significant Municipal Ordinance Updates**

- Houston Animal Code Overhaul:
  - Retail Sales of dogs & cats
  - Safe restraint for outdoor dogs
  - Microchipping
  - 1 Million for BARC
- Dallas Animal Code
  - Retail Sales of dogs & cats
- Stay tuned for updates:
  - New Braunfels
  - San Marcos







**What Can You Do to Help Texas Animals?**

# 2022 General Election Endorsements

## Texas State House



- Jacey Jetton (R – HD 26)
- Ron Reynolds (D-HD 27)
- Ryan Guillen (R – HD 31)
- Todd Hunter (R – HD 32)
- Justin Holland (R – HD 33)
- Erin Zwiener (D-HD 45)
- James Talarico (D-HD 50)
- Brad Buckley (R – 54)
- Glenn Rogers (R-HD 60)
- Lynn Stucky (R-HD 64)
- Kronnda Thimesch (R – HD 65)
- Jeff Leach (R-HD 67)
- Jamee Jolly (R-HD 70)
- Mary González (D-HD 75)
- Suleman Lalani (D-HD 76)
- Claudia Ordaz Perez (D-HD 79)
- Nicole Collier (D – HD 95)
- Craig Goldman (R – HD 97)
- Giovanni Capriglione (R-HD 98)
- Venton Jones (D-HD 100)
- Angie Chen Button (R – 112)
- Julie Johnson (D – HD 115)
- Rhett Bowers (D-HD 113)
- John Bryant (D – HD 114)
- Barbara Gervin-Hawkins (D – HD 120)
- Steve Allison (R – HD 121)
- Alma Allen (D – HD 131)
- Lacey Hull (R-HD 138)
- Christina Morales (D – HD 145)
- Jolanda Jones (D – HD 147)

Total number of General Endorsements: 45

Republicans: 22

Democrats: 23

# Endorsements (Cont.)

## Texas State Senate



- **Angela Paxton (R - SD 8)**
- **Kelly Hancock (R – SD 9)**
- **Phil King (R - SD 10)**
- **Tan Parker (R - SD 12)**
- **John Whitmire (D - SD 15)**
- **Nathan Johnson (D – SD 16)**
- **Joan Huffman (R – SD 17)**
- **Lois Kolkhorst (R – SD 18)**
- **Roland Gutierrez (D – SD 19)**
- **Juan Hinojosa (D – SD 20)**
- **Judith Zaffirini (D- SD 21)**
- **Donna Campbell (R – SD 25)**
- **Jose Menendez (D – SD 26)**
- **Morgan LaMantia (D - SD 27)**
- **Cesar Blanco (D – SD 29)**

# Important Election Dates

- Last Day to Register to Vote – Tues. October 11, 2022
- First Day of Early Voting in Person – Mon. October 24, 2022
- Last day to Apply for Ballot by Mail (received, not postmarked) – Fri. October 28, 2022
- Last Day of Early Voting in Person – Fri. November 4, 2022
- Election Day – Tues. November 8, 2022





# SAVE THE DATE!

## THLN Humane Lobby Day

### March 23, 2023



# THANK YOU!

Stay connected!

Jaime Olin

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BE AN  
**ADVO**   
FOR TEXAS  
ANIMALS

[Learn more at thln.org](http://thln.org)

