



**Dog Federation of Wisconsin**  
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## **Dog Federation of Wisconsin Position Paper Limit Laws**

We support pet owners that do not put their pets in a position of becoming a nuisance in their neighborhoods. This only results in localities limiting the number of pets that residents may own.

- We oppose limit laws because they punish those who are responsible pet owners. *Limit laws fail to affect irresponsible pet owners because these people ignore government imposed restrictions. Limit laws fail to prevent hoarding because that is a mental disorder.*
- We oppose limit laws because they make lawbreakers of otherwise law-abiding citizens. *Typically, pet owners will fly under the radar to avoid compliance with limit laws and protect their pets. These people will stop taking their pets to veterinarians, stop vaccinating and will no longer purchase pet licenses in order to end the paper trail. This creates a public health concern.*
- We oppose limit laws because hobbyists who breed occasional litters cannot abide by them. *Many hobbyists have contracts with their puppy buyers stipulating that the breeder will take back the dog if the buyer is unable to keep it.*
- We oppose limit laws as they are detrimental to 4-H children. *Many children are active in 4-H. In order to show their animal, a 4-H child must own and care for the animal. Typically these children's parents are hobbyists. With limit laws in place, a child may not be able to participate in 4-H activities as the animals that their parents own could be at the arbitrarily chosen limit.*
- We oppose limit laws because they negatively affect animal shelters and rescue groups. *Breed specific rescue groups know that you cannot fully evaluate a dog in a shelter situation. It takes living with such a dog for a minimum of 2 weeks to fully evaluate them; to ensure that the dog is not dangerous and what life style it is suited for. Foster families within the community make a commitment to these dogs. If limits were in place the shelters and rescue groups would lose their foster families.*

*Important note: if exemptions are allowed to pet limit laws for rescues, fosters or others, such favoritism is unfair to other law abiding, animal-owning residents.*

The fact is that some people may be perfectly capable of caring for many dogs while someone else fails with just one. Most people have enough common sense to know what their "limit" is without government imposing an arbitrary number.

- ✓ We support pet owners that know their own limit and make correct decisions for their welfare.
- ✓ We support responsible pet ownership which includes knowing where your pet is at all times. *In cases where dogs are causing a disturbance in the neighborhood, the owner/rescuer/foster have more animals than they can handle, or in situations of neglect/abuse, existing laws need only be enforced.*

Rather than attempt to establish limit laws which are subject to the negative unintended consequences outlined above, we support the implementation of positive efforts to educate pet owners, which is a more effective means to deal with the irresponsible pet owners. DFOU believes that helping citizens to become responsible pet owners should be the target of any change to current animal law.

*What particular incident caused the consideration of a limit law? Is there a case where existing law can not be enforced and there is an ongoing problem situation? If not, there is no reason to change current code. MOST multi-pet owners are more responsible owners than single pet households.*