



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

April 17, 2012

Senator Fran Pavley
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Oppose Senate Bill 1221

Dear Madam Chair,

The American Kennel Club writes today on behalf of thousands of responsible dog owners and sportsmen in California to oppose Senate Bill 1221 which will prohibit using dogs in the pursuit of a bear or bobcat. The California Department of Fish and Game studied this issue several times and concluded that there is no basis for restricting hunting in this manner. We ask that you support responsible sportsmen by opposing this measure.

The American Kennel Club (AKC) was established in 1884 to promote the study, breeding, exhibiting, and advancement of purebred dogs. We now represent over 5,000 dog clubs nationally, including 471 clubs in California. In 2011, AKC sanctioned over 250 performance events in California—including hunt tests and field trials—in which over 13,000 dogs participated. We encourage and strongly support the interaction and mutual enjoyment of owners and dogs in sporting activities.

The sponsors of SB 1221 have stated that they believe the use of dogs to pursue game is “inhumane and unsporting.” We have serious concerns that enactment of SB 1221 would set a precedent for outlawing others forms of hunting with dogs. Responsible and ethical hunters respect regulations, and season limits and pay license fees and federal excise taxes. These monies are the primary vehicle by which conservation efforts, which benefit all wildlife and California citizens, are funded.

Historical evidence suggests that humans have been hunting with dogs for thousands of years. Today’s sportsmen invest time and money to train and breed dogs to fulfill the original purposes of the breed: to pursue and retrieve game. These activities assist wildlife management officials and enhance the bond between humans and canines. For these reasons, the American Kennel Club asks you to stand with responsible sportsmen and oppose SB 1221.

Sincerely,

Sheila Goffe
Director, Government Relations

Cc: Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee