

July 13, 2016

The Honourable P. Couillard, M.L.A., Premier of the Province of Quebec
Édifice Honoré-Mercier, 3^e étage
835, boul. René-Lévesque Est
Québec, QC, G1A 1B4

Dear Sir,

As veterinarians and colleagues of Amanda Scholefield who has sent a letter concerning this issue, we the professionals of Timberlea Veterinary Clinic feel that in light of the terrible tragedy that recently befell the Vadnais family, and the resulting media focus on pit bulls, we understand the need for the Premier's office to take a stand on issues relating to dogs and public safety. However, we are convinced that instituting breed specific legislation, such as a ban on pit bulls, will not have the desired effect of reducing the number of dog bites, and will instead punish thousands of responsible dog owners. Instead we would urge the Premier's office to focus their efforts on enforcing existing bylaws, and on adopting dangerous dog legislation, whereby the behaviour, and not the physical appearance of the dog dictate the controls placed upon it.

As professionals in a busy veterinary clinic, we interact with multiple put bulls or pit bull type dogs on a daily basis. These dogs are generally sterilized, well socialized and responsibly cared for by their families. Due to the nature of our work, many of the animals brought through our doors are stressed, suffering from injury or illness and are in pain. Despite this, the majority of the pit bull type dogs we treat receive their veterinary care with wagging tails. Our experience shows that the physical appearance of our patients does not determine the level of risk they pose to our staff.

In conclusion, before moving forward with the proposed breed specific legislation, we would invite members of the Premier's office to meet any of the thousands of well trained, well cared for and well-loved pit bulls living in the province of Quebec. We would also encourage the Premier's office to develop effective dangerous dog bylaws in conjunction with veterinary behaviorists, animal welfare groups and other experts in the field. By doing so, no specific breeds would be discriminated against, but individual dogs of any breed showing signs of aggression towards people or other animals would be identified and with that, future bites prevented.

Respectfully yours,

Veterinarians

Technicians

Office assistants

