Dog Bites Are a Complex Societal Issue

Excerpt from Randall Lockwood’s Position Statement on Breed Specific Legislation in Denver, Colorado

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“Focusing on a single breed as the ‘source’ of the dog bite problem reflects a 19th century epidemiological mindset that attempts to identify the vector of a public health problem and eliminate that vector. This is the mindset originally applied to animal control due to its early function as a way of controlling disease – namely rabies. The dog bite problem is not a disease problem with a single vector, it is a complex societal issue that must address a wide range of human behaviors in ways that deal with irresponsible behavior that puts people and animals at risk, while minimizing the burdens placed on responsible pet owners. This has long been my personal opinion, as well as that of the organizations with which I have worked on these issues, including The HSUS, The ASPCA, CDC, and the AVMA.”