



Position Statement

Phoenix Animal Rescue

Dog Fighting

INTRODUCTION

Even though dog fighting is illegal across the United States, there are still tens of thousands of people participating in underground dog fighting around the world. Physical cruelty, abuse and neglect are unacceptable means of behavior for humans, and the same principles should apply to the treatment of animals. Dog fighting is a serious issue for a number of reasons; most importantly the treatment of these dogs is inhumane, it is creating a danger to communities by training dogs to be aggressive, it contributes to the issue of pet over population in animal shelters, and it is commonly associated with various other illegal activities such as gambling, drug use and violence.

Phoenix Animal Rescue is committed to being a part of the solution. As an advocate for the pit bull breed, PAR's goal is to educate the community about the severity of this issue, to unveil the truth about the pit bull breed and diminish and misunderstandings, and enforce more rigorous penalties for individuals caught participating in dog fighting.

BACKGROUND:

Dog fighting is a "sport" where two dogs, which have been specifically bred and trained to fight, are thrown into a ring to fight against each other for the entertainment of spectators, and often involves gambling over which dog will win.

The breed most commonly associated with dog fighting is the American pit bull terrier, which is now unfairly known as a violent killer. According to the ASPCA, the American pit bull terrier accounts for 99 percent of the species involved in dog fighting. Resulting in a stigma of pit bulls being seen as a dangerous, violent breed. Furthermore, this has led to an increase in breed-specific legislation banning pit bulls in many communities.

Dogs that are subjected to the dog fighting industry are forced to live in inhumane conditions, lacking adequate shelter or companionship. These dogs typically live outside, isolated from all humanity. They are abused and neglected, often starved and beaten to build up aggression. Professional dog fighters often partake in selective breeding, in order to control possession of the “champion dog blood line.” This contributes to the issue of pet over population because animals that do not live up to trainer’s expectations will be abandoned, if not killed. A common motto professional dog training breeders live by is, “breed the best, bury the rest.”

The injuries inflicted on dog fighters are severe and often fatal, including: broken bones, puncture wounds, severe bruising, internal bleeding, infection and much more.

PAR strongly opposes all activities, training and mistreatment associated with dog fighting, condemning any and all forms of cruelty and abuse for entertainment purposes.



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PAR supports current laws against dog fighting and the penalties inflicted upon participants of such activities.

Dog fighting is a felony offense in all 50 U.S. states. PAR supports increasing the penalties facing individuals who are participating in these acts of cruelty and neglect.

Phoenix Animal Rescue does not support any form of breed specific legislations as a solution to this problem.

Pit bulls have been given the unfair reputation of being an aggressive, dangerous breed. PAR believes it is important to hold the people performing these actions accountable, not the dogs who have fallen victim to these behaviors.

“There are no bad dogs, just bad owners,” said Michelle Dunlap, founder of Phoenix Animal Rescue.

PAR believes that pit bulls are just waiting for the chance to prove that they are loyal, loving companions. PAR believes that all animals deserve a happy life free from abuse, neglect and suffering. PAR firmly believes that any breed can be trained to be aggressive, especially when faced with such extreme conditions of abuse and neglect. PAR strongly discourages media outlets from distributing misinformation that is generalized to breed-specific allegations.

Phoenix Animal Rescue supports and encourages the education of the community regarding this issue and the misconception of pit bull breeds.

PAR is committed to providing resources for rehabilitation of dogs rescued from dog fighting and educating individuals about the responsibilities of pet ownership and the role humans play in the behavior of dogs.

PROVIDING A SOLUTION:

PAR believes the solution to this problem is education about the misconceptions of the pit bull breed, exposing the stigma of negative media coverage that has led to city-wide bans of specific breeds across the country. Furthermore, PAR believes individuals participating in dog fighting should be faced with more serious consequences because just paying a fine is not sufficient. This included individuals caught participating in dog fighting activities, spectators, because they are willing participants supporting criminal activity and encouraging the continuation of the business.