



# House of Representatives

## File No. 612

General Assembly

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February Session, 2004 (Reprint of File No. 189)

House Bill No. 5452  
As Amended by House  
Amendment Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
April 16, 2004

### **AN ACT CONCERNING GUIDE AND ASSISTANCE DOGS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (d) of section 46a-44 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
3 *October 1, 2005*):

4 (d) For purposes of this section, "guide dog" or "assistance dog"  
5 includes a dog being trained as a guide dog or assistance dog and  
6 "person training a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or a dog to  
7 assist a deaf or mobility impaired person" means a person who is  
8 employed by and authorized to engage in designated training  
9 activities by a guide dog organization or assistance dog organization  
10 that complies with the criteria for membership in a professional  
11 association of guide dog or assistance dog schools and who carries  
12 photographic identification indicating such employment and  
13 authorization, or a person who volunteers for a guide dog organization  
14 or assistance dog organization that authorizes such volunteers to raise  
15 dogs to become guide dogs or assistance dogs and causes the

- 16 identification of such dog with (1) identification tags, (2) ear tattoos, (3)  
17 identifying bandanas on puppies, (4) identifying coats on adult dogs,  
18 or (5) leashes and collars.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2005</i>

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 05 \$	FY 06 \$
Judicial Dept.	GF - Revenue Gain	Potential Minimal	Potential Minimal
Consumer Protection, Dept.	GF - None	None	None

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill allows volunteers who are training guide dogs or assistance dogs the same rights of use as employees of guide or assistance dog organizations, so long as the dogs are identified in accordance with the bill. The bill thereby expands the applicability of the existing criminal sanction<sup>1</sup> for denying the rights of use and entry. Annual revenue from fines is estimated to be less than \$1,000 since few offenses are anticipated: there were no offenses under current law in FY 02 or FY 03.

House Amendment "A" eliminated the bill's provision covering dogs trained to aid the emotional health of hospital patients and nursing and retirement home residents, known as "therapy dogs." Instead, the amendment provided that authorized volunteer trainers would be given the same rights of access if their guide dog or assistance dog in training is properly identified. The amendment reduces the potential minimal revenue gain under the bill.

<sup>1</sup> It is a class C misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to three months' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$500.

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**OLR Bill Analysis**

HB 5452 (as amended by House "A")\*

**AN ACT CONCERNING ENTRANCE TO PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE TRAINING OF THERAPY DOGS****SUMMARY:**

This bill gives the same rights of use and entry to someone who volunteers to train a guide or assistance dog as are currently enjoyed by someone employed to train these dogs. Specifically, it allows a volunteer to travel on any mode of public transportation and enter any place of public accommodation offering its services to the public. It makes it a class C misdemeanor (punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine of up to \$500, or both) to deny a volunteer trainer and dog access. For the volunteer to enjoy these rights, the organization must (1) authorize the volunteer to raise dogs to become guide or assistance dogs and (2) have the dog identified with ID tags, ear tattoos, bandanas on puppies or coats on adult dogs, or leashes and collars.

\*House Amendment "A" eliminates references to therapy dogs, which the original bill defined as dogs trained to aid the emotional health of hospital patients and nursing home residents, and applies the bill to volunteer trainers rather than therapy dog trainers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2004

**WHERE THE DOG MUST BE ADMITTED**

The bill requires a dog and trainer to be admitted to a train or other mode of public transportation and to any place of public accommodation offering services, facilities, or goods to the public, including public buildings, inns, restaurants, hotels, motels, tourist cabins, and places of amusement. The bill also applies to dwellings when the trainer is a guest of a lawful occupant, but owner-occupied, two-family houses and room-rentals are exempt.

**BACKGROUND**

***Legislative History***

The House referred the bill (File 189) to the Judiciary Committee on March 30. It reported the bill favorably without change on April 6.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 19 Nay 0

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 37 Nay 0