

**Public Policy Position
SB 761 and SB 762**

The Animal Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 244 members. The Animal Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan and the position expressed herein is that of the Animal Law Section only and not the State Bar of Michigan. To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this item.

The Animal Law Section has a public policy decision-making body with 15 members. On March 11, 2022, the Section adopted its position after an electronic discussion and vote. 13 members voted in favor of the Section's position, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 2 members did not vote.

Oppose

Explanation:

The Animal Law Section opposes HB 761 and HB 762. HB 761 would amend the Michigan Penal Code's anti-neglect statute (MCL § 750.50) to exempt sled dogs. HB 762 would create exemptions for sled dogs from the Dog Law of 1919 (MCL § 287.262) and add sled dogs to the definition of working dogs. The Section is opposed to any changes that would erode the protections provided by the Michigan Penal Code and the Dog Law of 1919. The commercial sled dog industry is rife with opportunities for animal abuse, and there have been criminal cruelty charges brought against commercial sled dog operations in many states (<https://aldf.org/article/commercialized-cruelty-to-sled-dogs/>). Taking away any protections from sled dogs creates a slippery slope and results in less protection for animals in an industry where more protection is needed.

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