

**Public Policy Position
HB 4256**

The Animal Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 259 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 August 12, 2021, the Section adopted its position after an electronic discussion and vote. 14 members voted in favor of the Section's position, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 1 member did not vote.

Support

Explanation:

The Animal Law Section supports HB 4256, which would amend the Michigan Penal Code to provide access to places of public accommodation for service dogs in training with their trainer or animal raiser. Service dogs provide invaluable assistance to their owners when they are fully trained and greatly improve their owners' mobility and quality of life. However, in order to be trained to provide that assistance, they must be exposed to and trained in the real-world environment in which they will be required to work. By requiring trainers to be employed by and animal raisers to be raising dogs on behalf of accredited service animal agencies, this bill appropriately restricts the privilege of access to public accommodation to legitimate service dogs in training. The bill also distinguishes legitimate service animals from emotional support animals.

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