



City of Riverside, California
Office of the Mayor
PATRICIA LOCK DAWSON



March 17, 2023

The Honorable Reginald Jones-Sawyer
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 5210
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 742 (Jackson) Law enforcement: police canines – OPPOSE

Dear Chairman Jones-Sawyer,

On behalf of the City of Riverside, I write to respectfully oppose AB 742 (Jackson) which would preclude California law enforcement from using canines for arrests and apprehensions. Police canines are a tremendously valuable tool to protect our law enforcement officers and the public.

The City of Riverside Police Department has six apprehension canines who are involved in thousands of calls each year. A small percentage of confrontations involve an “apprehension,” which means the canine bit a suspect. In 2019, there were 131 surrenders and 3 apprehensions, which is a 2% bite-to-surrender ratio. In 2020 the bite-to-surrender ratio was 3%, 2021 was 2% and 2022 was 6%. Canines are rarely used to bite a suspect.

Our Police Department continually engages in rigorous professional training with our canine officers and their officers, which are highly scrutinized and carefully selected. The proper and legal use of police canines is likely due to the selection process, specialized training, strict organizational policies, and guidance from state and federal law.

A 98% successful surrender rate demonstrates that canine officers give ample opportunity for suspects to submit to arrest without the need for a canine bite. Furthermore, existing laws, oversight systems, and processes in place to regulate police canines, which negates the need to take away this valuable, life-saving public safety tool.

For these reasons, the City of Riverside must respectfully oppose AB 742. If you have questions regarding the City’s position, please contact Chekesha Gilliam, Intergovernmental Relations Officer at (951) 826-2419 or CGilliam@riversideca.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Lock Dawson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patricia" being the most prominent.

Patricia Lock Dawson
Mayor, City of Riverside

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Public Safety Committee
The Honorable Corey Jackson
City of Riverside Legislative Delegation