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News 

Fresno County Supervisors Approve Tyler's Law

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September 20, 2005 -- Tyler's Law, named after 6-year-old Tyler Babcock who was mauled to death by dogs, will go into effect within 30 days after tough animal control laws got final approval from the Fresno County Supervisors on Tuesday.

Under the smiling face of Tyler Babcock, the phrase "Never Again!" was written on the shirts worn by his family members.

Tyler's grandmother, Sharon Babcock, hopes the new law will prevent future deaths, "Maybe prevent this from happening to another family or having another child lost."

Since Tyler's mauling death in January, the Babcocks have been turning their grief into action, trying to get tougher animal control laws passed at both the local and state level.

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Now, at least at the local level, they've succeeded. As the Babcocks watched, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Tyler's Law. Tyler's Law gives authorities more power to take aggressive dogs off the street, even if they've never bitten anyone. The board also expanded leash laws to cover the county.

But, when it came to requiring owners to spay and neuter pets, there was resistance from local breeders who said they should be exempt.

"We would not liked to be lumped together. Yes, we're for the leash law. Yes, I'm for spaying and neutering. And, I don't think people take good enough care of our animals, but we do," said local dog breeder Penny Petrille.

The board agreed to delay the spaying and neutering portion of the law, but insisted something needs to be done quickly.

"No one's trying to take anybody's business away, no one's trying to take anyone's fun away, but we have a problem," explained Fresno County Supervisor Phil Larson.

Meantime, the Babcocks are gathering signatures and urging the governor to support SB 861, which would allow cities and counties to regulate certain breeds of dogs, including pit bulls.

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