A BILL

FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 14 OF THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO, BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 14-75 RELATING TO THE KEEPING OF PIT BULLS AND OTHER RESTRICTED BREEDS OF DOGS

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Aurora, Colorado, finds that Pit Bulls tend to be stronger than other dogs, often give no warning signals before attacking, and are less willing than other dogs to retreat from an attack; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds Pit Bull attacks, more often than other types of dogs, result in multiple bites and attacks of greater severity; and

WHEREAS, the Council held a public hearing on August 9th, 2005 to consider whether Pit Bull regulations would promote the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds and declares that it is necessary to ban the ownership, possession and keeping of Pit Bulls and other restricted breeds to protect the health, safety and welfare of the city's residents.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO:

Section 1. That the city Code of the City of Aurora, Colorado, is hereby amended by adding a section, to be numbered 14-75 which section reads as follows:

SECTION 14-75. UNLAWFUL KEEPING OF PIT BULLS OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG.

(A) PROHIBITED. IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON TO HAVE, OWN, POSSESS, KEEP, EXERCISE CONTROL OVER, MAINTAIN, HARBOR, TRANSPORT, OR SELL WITHIN THE CITY ANY PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG.

(B) DEFINITIONS.

1. “IMMEDIATE FAMILY” FOR PURPOSES OF THIS CHAPTER, INCLUDES THE OWNER’S SPOUSE, CHILD, PARENT OR SIBLING.
2. “MUZZLE” FOR PURPOSES OF THIS CHAPTER, SHALL MEAN A RESTRAINING DEVICE MADE OF METAL, PLASTIC, LEATHER, CLOTH OR A COMBINATION OF THESE MATERIALS THAT, WHEN FITTED AND FASTENED OVER A SNOUT/MOUTH/HEAD, PREVENTS THE DOG FROM BITING BUT ALLOWS ROOM FOR THE DOG TO BREATH AND PANT. THE MUZZLE MUST BE MADE IN A MANNER THAT WILL NOT CAUSE INJURY TO THE DOG OR INTERFERE WITH ITS VISION OR RESPIRATION, BUT MUST PREVENT IT FROM BITING ANY PERSON OR ANIMAL.

3. “PIT BULL” FOR PURPOSES OF THIS CHAPTER, IS DEFINED AS ANY DOG THAT IS AN AMERICAN PIT BULL TERRIER, AMERICAN STAFFORDSHIRE TERRIER, STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER, OR ANY DOG DISPLAYING THE MAJORITY OF PHYSICAL TRAITS OF ANY ONE (1) OR MORE OF THE ABOVE BREEDS, OR ANY DOG EXHIBITING THOSE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS WHICH SUBSTANTIALLY CONFORM TO THE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB OR UNITED KENNEL CLUB FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE BREEDS.

4. “RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG” SHALL MEAN ANY AMERICAN BULLDOG (OLD COUNTRY BULLDOG), DOGO ARGENTINO, CANARY DOG (CANARY ISLAND DOG, PRESA CANARIO, PERRO DE PRESA CANARIO), PRESA MALLORQUIN (PERO DE PRESA MALLORQUIN, CA DE BOU), TOSA INU (TOSA FIGHTING DOG, JAPANESE FIGHTING DOG, JAPANESE MASTIFF), CANE CORSO (CANE DI MACELLAIO, SICILIAN BRANCHIERO), FILA BRASILAIRO OR ANY DOG DISPLAYING THE MAJORITY OF PHYSICAL TRAITS OF ANY ONE (1) OR MORE OF THE ABOVE BREEDS.

5. "SECURE TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE" FOR PURPOSES OF THIS CHAPTER, IS A SECURE ENCLOSURE USED FOR PURPOSES OF TRANSPORTING A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG AND WHICH INCLUDES A TOP AND BOTTOM PERMANENTLY ATTACHED TO THE SIDES EXCEPT FOR A "DOOR" FOR REMOVAL OF THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG. SUCH ENCLOSURE MUST BE OF SUCH MATERIAL AND SECURED WITH A KEYED OR COMBINATION LOCK SO THAT THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG CANNOT EXIT THE ENCLOSURE ON ITS OWN.

6. “SECURE PEN OR ENCLOSURE” FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS CHAPTER, SHALL MEAN A SIX-SIDED STRUCTURE DESIGNED TO PREVENT ENTRY OF A CHILD OR ESCAPE OF A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG. SUCH PEN OR STRUCTURE MUST HAVE MINIMUM DIMENSIONS OF FIVE-FEET BY TEN-FEET PER ANIMAL HOUSED WITHIN AND MUST HAVE SECURE CHAIN-LINK SIDES, A SECURED TOP AND A SECURE BOTTOM. THE ENCLOSURE MUST PROVIDE PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS FOR THE DOG. ALL STRUCTURES ERECTED TO HOUSE A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED
BREED OF DOG MUST COMPLY WITH ALL ZONING AND BUILDING ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS OF THE CITY AND SHALL BE KEPT IN A CLEAN AND SANITARY CONDITION. THE GATE OF THE PEN OR ENCLOSURE SHALL BE SECURED WITH A KEYED OR COMBINATION LOCK.

(C) EXCEPTIONS. THE PROHIBITION IN SUBSECTION (A) SHALL NOT APPLY IN THE FOLLOWING ENUMERATED CIRCUMSTANCES. FAILURE BY THE OWNER TO COMPLY AND REMAIN IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OF THE TERMS OF ANY APPLICABLE EXCEPTION SHALL SUBJECT THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG TO IMMEDIATE IMPOUNDMENT AND DISPOSITION.

1. THE OWNER OF A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG WHO HAS APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE WITHIN SIXTY DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, AND WHO MAINTAINS THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG AT ALL TIMES IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION AND ALL OTHER APPLICABLE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS CHAPTER, MAY KEEP A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG WITHIN THE CITY.

2. THE ANIMAL CARE DIVISION MAY TEMPORARILY TRANSPORT AND HARBOR ANY PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG FOR PURPOSES OF ENFORCING THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CHAPTER.

3. ANY VETERINARIAN WHILE TREATING OR GROOMING A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG, OR HOLDING SUCH PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG AFTER TREATMENT UNTIL CLAIMED BY THE OWNER OR RELEASED TO AN ANIMAL CARE OFFICER.

4. A PERSON MAY TEMPORARILY TRANSPORT INTO AND HOLD IN THE CITY A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF SHOWING SUCH PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG IN A PLACE OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION, CONTEST OR SHOW SPONSORED BY A DOG CLUB ASSOCIATION OR SIMILAR ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, THE SPONSOR OF THE EXHIBITION, CONTEST, OR SHOW MUST RECEIVE WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE CITY MANAGER OR DESIGNEE, MUST OBTAIN ANY OTHER PERMITS OR LICENSES REQUIRED BY CITY ORDINANCE, AND MUST PROVIDE PROTECTIVE MEASURES ADEQUATE TO PREVENT PIT BULLS OR RESTRICTED BREEDS FROM ESCAPING OR INJURING THE PUBLIC. THE PERSON WHO TRANSPORTS AND HOLDS A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG FOR SHOWING SHALL, AT ALL TIMES WHEN THE PIT BULL OR
RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG IS BEING TRANSPORTED WITHIN THE CITY TO AND FROM THE PLACE OF EXHIBITION, CONTEST, OR SHOW, KEEP THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG CONFINED IN A SECURE TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE LOCKED WITH A KEYED OR COMBINATION LOCK AND BEARING A CAUTION SIGN AFFIXED IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION WARNING PEOPLE A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG IS CONFINED WITHIN.

5. THE OWNER OF A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG MAY TEMPORARILY TRANSPORT THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG THROUGH THE CITY. DURING SUCH TRANSPORT THE OWNER MAY NOT STOP WITHIN THE CITY FOR ANY REASON NOT REASONABLY RELATED TO AND NECESSARY FOR TRAVEL.

(D) LICENSE. THE OWNER OF A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG WHO HAS APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE WITHIN SIXTY DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE, SHALL BE ALLOWED TO KEEP SUCH PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG WITHIN THE CITY. AS A CONDITION OF ISSUANCE OF A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE, THE OWNER SHALL AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION, COMPLY WITH OR OTHERWISE PROVIDE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE THAT THE OWNER IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS:

1. THE OWNER OF THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG SHALL PROVIDE PROOF OF A CURRENT RABIES VACCINATION AND SHALL PAY AN ANNUAL PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE FEE TO BE SET BY CITY COUNCIL.

2. THE OWNER OF THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG SHALL KEEP CURRENT THE LICENSE FOR SUCH PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG THROUGH ANNUAL RENEWAL. SUCH LICENSE IS NOT TRANSFERABLE OR RENEWABLE EXCEPT BY THE HOLDER OF THE LICENSE OR BY A MEMBER OF THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY OF SUCH LICENSEE. A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE TAG WILL BE ISSUED TO THE OWNER AT THE TIME OF ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE. SUCH LICENSE TAG SHALL BE ATTACHED TO THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG BY MEANS OF A COLLAR OR HARNESS WHICH MUST BE WORN BY THE ANIMAL AT ALL TIMES, CLEARLY VISIBLE, AND SHALL NOT BE ATTACHED TO ANY PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG OTHER THAN THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG FOR WHICH THE LICENSE WAS ISSUED.

3. THE OWNER MUST BE AT LEAST TWENTY-ONE (21) YEARS OF AGE.

4. THE OWNER SHALL PRESENT TO THE CITY MANAGER OR DESIGNEE PROOF THAT THE OWNER HAS PROCURED LIABILITY INSURANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF AT LEAST ONE HUNDRED
THOUSAND DOLLARS ($100,000.00), COVERING ANY DAMAGE OR INJURY WHICH MAY BE CAUSED BY A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG DURING THE TWELVE-MONTH PERIOD COVERED BY THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE.

5. The owner shall, at the owner’s own expense, have the pit bull or restricted breed of dog spayed or neutered and shall present to the city manager or designee documentary proof from a licensed veterinarian that this sterilization has been performed.

6. The owner shall, at the owner’s own expense, have a microchip containing an identification number implanted into the pit bull or restricted breed of dog. The city manager or designee shall maintain a file containing the registration numbers and names of the pit bull or restricted breed of dog and the names and addresses of the owners. The owner shall notify the city manager or designee of any change of address.

7. At all times when a pit bull or restricted breed of dog is at the property of the owner, the owner shall keep the pit bull or restricted breed of dog confined. When outdoors, all registered pit bulls or restricted breed of dogs shall be confined in a locked secure pen or enclosure. A warning sign shall be affixed to the gate of the structure notifying people a pit bull or restricted breed of dog is contained within.

8. No pit bull or restricted breed of dog may be kept on a porch, patio or in any part of a house or structure that would allow the dog to exit such building on its own volition.

9. At all times when a pit bull or restricted breed of dog is away from the property of the owner, the owner shall keep the pit bull or restricted breed of dog muzzled and either in a secure temporary enclosure or securely leashed with a leash no longer than four (4) feet in length held by someone twenty-one years of age or older who is capable of effectively controlling the dog. Extension-style leashes may not be used. Leashes may not be attached to inanimate objects.

10. The owner shall not sell or otherwise transfer the pit bull or restricted breed of dog to any person residing within the city except a member of the owner’s immediate family who will then become the owner and will be subject to all of the provisions of this section.

11. The owner shall immediately notify the city manager or designee in the event that the pit bull or restricted
BREED IS LOOSE, STOLEN, AT-LARGE, UNCONFINED, HAS MAULED, BITTEN, ATTACKED, THREATENED, OR IN ANY WAY MENACED ANOTHER ANIMAL OR HUMAN, OR HAS DIED.

12. THE OWNER SHALL HAVE POSTED AT THE FRONT DOOR ENTRANCE TO THE OWNER'S PROPERTY WHERE THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED IS KEPT A CONSPICUOUS AND CLEARLY LEGIBLE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED SIGN OBTAINED FROM THE ANIMAL CARE DIVISION.

13. NO PERSON APPLYING FOR A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG LICENSE SHALL BE GRANTED A LITTER OR FANCIER’S PERMIT PURSUANT TO SECTION 14-42 OF THIS SECTION FOR SUCH PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG.

14. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS SHALL RESULT IN A REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE, IMPOUNDMENT AND DISPOSITION PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION.

(E) IMPOUNDMENT. THE ANIMAL CARE DIVISION IS AUTHORIZED TO IMMEDIATELY IMPOUND ANY PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG FOUND WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS WHICH DOES NOT FALL WITHIN THE EXCEPTIONS LISTED IN SUBSECTION (C) OR (D), SUBJECT TO A PRE-TRIAL HEARING PURSUANT TO SECTION 14-4 OF THIS CODE. IF THE DOG IS FOUND TO BE A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG, IT SHALL BE DESTROYED UNLESS THE OWNER PRODUCES EVIDENCE DEEMED SUFFICIENT BY THE COURT THAT THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG IS TO BE PERMANENTLY TAKEN OUT OF THE CITY. SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE MUST INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, A NOTARIZED AGREEMENT FROM THE PERSON TAKING CUSTODY OF THE ANIMAL CONTAINING AN ADDRESS AND DATE OF TRANSFER. ADDITIONALLY, THE OWNER MUST CONSENT TO AN IN-HOME INSPECTION BY THE ANIMAL CARE DIVISION WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF RELEASE FOR THE PURPOSE OF VERIFYING THE DOG’S REMOVAL FROM THE CITY. PRIOR TO RELEASE, THE OWNER MUST PAY THE COST OF IMPOUNDMENT AND MICROCHIP THE DOG PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (D)(6) OF THIS SECTION. IF THE DOG IS FOUND NOT TO BE A PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG, THE DOG SHALL BE RELEASED TO THE OWNER.

(F) PENALTY. ANY PERSON FOUND GUILTY OF VIOLATING THIS SECTION SHALL, UPON CONVICTION, BE SUBJECT TO THE PAYMENT OF A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN $700.00. IN ADDITION TO THE FINES STATED IN THIS SUBSECTION, A PERSON CONVICTED UNDER THIS SECTION MAY BE SUBJECT TO NOT MORE THAN ONE YEAR IN JAIL. NONE OF THE MINIMUM MONETARY FINES IN THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE SUSPENDED BY THE MUNICIPAL COURT AND THE PENALTIES IN THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE IMPOSED IN ADDITION TO THE COURT-ORDERED DESTRUCTION PROVIDED FOR IN SECTION 14-4.
Section 2. That the Section 14-4, subsections (b) and (g), of the City Code of the City of Aurora, Colorado, is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 14-4. Impoundment; court proceedings; destruction of animals.

(b) Length of impoundment. If there is probable cause to believe that there is a violation of sections 14-5(a) through (c), 14-6(a) through (d), 14-7(a), 14-8, 14-12, 14-13(a), 14-72, or 14-74 OR 14-75 the animal may be taken into custody by the animal care officer or member of the police department and impounded in the animal shelter in a humane manner for a period of not less than three days, unless earlier claimed upon payment of all requisite fees as set forth in subsection (g) of this section if a complaint has not been filed in municipal court pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. If the owner fails to claim the impounded animal after three days subsequent to being notified or reasonable efforts to notify have been made, the animal shall become the property of the city and shall be disposed of in a humane manner at the discretion of the city manager or designee. The owner shall still be subject to all fees and costs.

(g) Court findings; release of animal; destruction; surrender. If a complaint has been filed in the municipal court against the owner of an animal impounded for violation of section 14-5(a) through (c), 14-6(a) through (d), 14-7(a), 14-8, 14-12, 14-13(a), 14-72, or 14-74 OR 14-75, the animal shall not be released from impoundment except on the order of the municipal judge. Charges and payment of all costs under subsection (g) of this section, in addition to any penalties for violation of this chapter, shall be assessed against the owner. If the fees and charges are not paid within three days after an order releasing the animal, it shall be deemed an unclaimed animal under subsection (b) of this section. Such an order releasing an animal shall not occur without 24 hours' notice to the city animal shelter and the city attorney's municipal court office, so as to provide an opportunity to oppose release based on the character of the animal; prior offenses involving the same owner or animal; improper care; or prior unpaid fines, fees or charges.

The municipal judge may, upon making a finding that the alleged owner has failed, without prior excuse, to appear for any court date on the complaint, order the animal to be surrendered to the Aurora Animal Care Division or destroyed in a humane manner under the supervision of the animal care officer. WHEN, AT A HEARING FOR RELEASE OR DESTRUCTION, AN OWNER OF AN ANIMAL THAT HAS BEEN FOUND BY THE MUNICIPAL JUDGE, BY A PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE, TO HAVE VIOLATED ANY PROVISION OF SECTION 14-75, THE ANIMAL SHALL BE DESTROYED UNLESS THE OWNER PRODUCES EVIDENCE DEEMED SUFFICIENT BY THE COURT PURSUANT TO SECTION 14-75(E) THAT THE PIT BULL OR RESTRICTED BREED OF DOG IS TO BE PERMANENTLY TAKEN OUT OF THE CITY. When, at a hearing for release or destruction, an owner of an animal that has been found by the municipal judge, by a preponderance of the evidence, to have violated section 14-5(a) through (c), 14-7(a), 14-12, 14-72 or 14-74, the animal shall be ordered surrendered for disposition or destroyed unless the municipal judge finds, by a preponderance of the evidence, there exists reasonable assurance that the animal can be safely maintained, cared for and controlled without danger to the community or that the animal does not create a nuisance to the surrounding neighbors or community. In determining whether the animal can be safely maintained, cared for and controlled by its owner, the judge shall consider all relevant and reliable evidence, whether or not the
evidence is admissible at trial, including, without limitation, pre-bite or post-bite behavior indicative of vicious, aggressive or dangerous tendencies regardless of impoundment status; however, the mere absence of other instances of post-bite vicious, aggressive or dangerous behavior, regardless of impoundment status, shall not be sufficient to support a finding in favor of release. Additionally, when determination of the animal being a nuisance is made, the judge shall consider the frequency of violations and the degree of annoyance.

Section 3. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances of the City Code of the City of Aurora, Colorado in conflict herewith are expressly repealed.

Section 4. That, pursuant to Section 5-5 of the Charter of the City of Aurora, Colorado, the second publication of this ordinance shall be by reference, utilizing the ordinance.

INTRODUCED, READ AND ORDERED PUBLISHED this _____________ day of ________________________, 2005.

PASSED AND ORDERED PUBLISHED BY REFERENCE this _____________ day of ________________________, 2005.

________________________________
EDWARD J. TAUER, Mayor

ATTEST:

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DEBRA JOHNSON, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM: