

PETA URGES DORCHESTER COUNTY
TO BAN PIT BULLS IN WAKE OF FATAL ATTACK ON TODDLER

<http://www.peta.org/mc/NewsItem.asp?id=9759>

'Brian's Law' Could Prevent Future Tragedies, Says Group

For Immediate Release:

April 27, 2007

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Dorchester County, S.C. This morning, PETA sent an urgent letter to Dorchester County Council Chair Larry Hargett and other council members urging them to follow the lead of dozens of other jurisdictions across the country by banning or strictly regulating pit bull ownership. The appeal follows news reports of an April 23 incident in which a pit bull fatally attacked 1 ½-year-old Brian Palmer in his mother's home. News sources state that the dog who also killed a family cat just weeks earlier was typically confined to a utility room in the home before she escaped on Monday.

PETA is asking the Dorchester County Council to ban the acquisition of pit bulls and strictly regulate grandfathered ownership of pit bulls currently living in homes. PETA which has offered to assist the county in drafting the legislation also suggests that the ordinance be named "Brian's Law" in honor of the victim.

PETA points out that that its offices are inundated with calls about pit bulls who injure and sometimes kill people after being neglected, abused, or used for fighting. Usually, people who acquire pit bulls see them as living weapons and put the animals in heavy chains, taunt them into aggressive behavior, and leave them out in all weather extremes in order to "toughen" them.

Communities across the country including Denver, Colo.; Dade County, Fla.; Kansas City, Kan.; and Boston, Mass. have banned or regulated pit bull ownership. Because unsterilized dogs are almost three times more likely to attack than dogs who have been spayed or neutered, California recently passed a law allowing jurisdictions within the state to mandate the spaying and neutering of pit bulls. Continuous chaining is also a major cause of aggression in pit bulls and other breeds. Dogs are pack animals, and they become frustrated when they are chained or confined alone. This frustration often turns into aggression.

"More and more communities are realizing that the best way to prevent another tragic death like Brian's is to enact a ban on acquiring pit bulls," says PETA Director Daphna Nachminovitch. "We urge Dorchester County to join their ranks by immediately introducing this urgently needed legislation."

PETA's letter to the Dorchester County Council is available upon request. For more information, please visit HelpingAnimals.com.