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## **Sponsored by Leading Law Enforcement Orgs, AB 3241 (Pacheco) Proposes Statewide Standards for Police K-9 Programs**

*Legislation aims to create consistency, safety, and transparency around the use of canines in law enforcement through training, policy requirements, legal principles, and reporting requirements.*

**Sacramento, CA** — Today, Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco introduced [Assembly Bill 3241](#), which sets clear and comprehensive statewide standards for law enforcement K-9 programs. As proud sponsors of AB 3241, the [Peace Officers Research Association of California \(PORAC\)](#), the [California Police Chiefs Association \(CPCA\)](#), and the [California Association of Highway Patrolmen \(CAHP\)](#) strongly support the goal of the legislation to ensure uniformity, accountability, and excellence in the use of police canines throughout California.

"I am dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of public safety and am proud to author this critical legislation in partnership with California's top law enforcement organizations," said **Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco (AD 64)**. "AB 3241 represents a significant step forward in standardizing law enforcement K-9 programs, enhancing accountability, and fostering trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Together, we are committed to promoting professionalism and excellence in the use of police K-9 units across our state."

The following statistics detail three years of K-9 unit deployment by the California Highway Patrol from 2020-2022:

**Total Deployments:** 2,376

**Total Bites:** 34 (1.4%)

**Total Active K-9's:** 43

**Level of Injury:**

- 32 – minor injury
- 2 – serious injury

**2020 Deployments:** 1,012

**2020 Bites:** 15

**2021 Deployments:** 633

**2021 Bites:** 12

**2022 Deployments:** 731

**2022 Bites:** 7

Scientific research estimates that a canine's sense of smell is anywhere between 10,000 and 100,000 times greater than a human's. In addition, canines can hear sounds that can't be picked up by the human ear,

like specific sounds amongst ambient noise. Canine law enforcement handlers can rely on these heightened senses for safety and protection.

While there is currently significant case law, training, and policy guidelines that apply to the deployment of K-9 programs, there are few statutory standards that ensure consistency across these programs. AB 3241 focuses on four key areas to standardize the use of canines in law enforcement – training, policy requirements, legal principles, and reporting requirements.

AB 3241 is sponsored by California's leading law enforcement organizations:

"Canines are just one of the tools that our members use when responding to high-risk situations. When used effectively and appropriately, canines' innate sense of smell and hearing can play an extremely important role in protecting both officer and community members from potential threats. We recognize the power of canines and understand the need to control that force, which is why we are proud to sponsor AB 3241, which will ensure that all law enforcement personnel are safely deploying canines and prioritizing the safety of canine handlers and the public." – **Brian Marvel, President of the Peace Officers Research Association of California**

"CPCA's commitment to public safety goes hand-in-hand with responsible and effective law enforcement practices. We recognize the power that canines possess to amplify our members' law enforcement efforts, but also understand the need to control that force. Our sponsorship of AB 3241 underscores our unwavering commitment to elevating the standards of law enforcement canine programs and promoting consistency across programs." – **Alexander Gammelgard, President of California Police Chiefs Association**

"We are proud to join our fellow law enforcement leaders in sponsoring AB 3241, which demonstrates a collaborative effort to establish statewide standards, ensuring the highest level of training and accountability for our law enforcement K-9 programs. All of us are working towards the same goal – a safe and secure future for all Californians, which includes both officers and community members. Having a standardized system for utilizing canines to de-escalate conflict will build trust and accountability that our communities can rely on." – **Jake Johnson, President of California Association of Highway Patrolmen**

#### **About the Peace Officers Research Association of California:**

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. PORAC represents over 80,000 public safety members and over 955 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.

#### **About the California Police Chiefs Association**

Established in 1966, the California Police Chiefs Association represents municipal, school and transportation police chiefs and their agencies in California. Association members provide public safety for more than 30 million Californians.

#### **About the California Association of Highway Patrolmen**

The California Association of Highway Patrolmen is a labor union that advocates on behalf of uniformed California Highway Patrol officers, including active officers at all ranks, retired CHP officers and survivors.