

From: Marybeth [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 2, 2023 6:46 PM
To: Torres, Michael Angelo (DPH - Contractor) <michaelangelo.torres@sfdph.org>
Subject: Opposition to legislation banning e-collars

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Commissioner Torres,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed legislation banning the use of e-collars in San Francisco.

I write from the perspective of a:

- Rescue dog owner (not a professional trainer)
- Supporter and volunteer at a local animal rescue
- Supporter of Animal Welfare organizations
- Supporter of U.C. Davis School of Medicine
- Cyclist (I ride on trails and open spaces with my dog)
- An equestrian (I have conditioned sport horses on trails)
- Hiker and backpacker (my dog is always with me)

In my opinion, an e-collar is a valuable training tool that I became familiar with my most recent dog which is a cattledog mix rescue.

He is 7 years old and I adopted him at 1 year.

I have worked with a trainer ever since I adopted my dog. Though I am not a professional, my dog and I have mastered high level behaviors and tricks using positive reinforcement and rewards. In 2019 my dog performed with the ODC professional dance troupe in their Summer Dance Festival - Canine Comfort. Last year we were invited to perform tricks on a TV show hosted by Sarah Silverman. It will air this year. My dog has also competed in AKC Rally classes placing first.

If positive reinforcement has gotten my dog so far, why then do I consider e-collars to be a valuable training tool? Because, there are safety and emergency situations where positive reinforcement is not effective. I hike with my dog off leash where it is allowed and I want him to be well mannered and safe around horses, livestock and wildlife. As an equestrian and cyclist I am serious about trail manners and the safety of others as well as my dog. I also believe that dogs are happiest and healthiest if they are allowed to be off leash. I had a problem, though my dog has a good recall. I was unable to recall if a coyote ran across the trail or was spotted in the distance. Because this was not a scenario I could predict or repeat, I could not redirect his attention and reward. It happens too fast! I consulted our trainer and he suggested an e-collar. We had never used one and knew I needed training. We went out together in the field so I could be properly trained in a real life situation. After that lesson and subsequent hikes and coyote sightings I was able to effectively prevent my dog from chasing coyotes and wildlife. My dog is now trained and is also now reliable around livestock which makes him a model citizen. My dog was never hurt by the e-collar because it was used correctly. My dog is happy, healthy and relaxed. He has a great life and can enjoy appropriate freedoms safely because he had this e-collar training.

I applaud you for advocating for the welfare of animals however, I believe that banning an effective and safe training tool will only do more harm than good. There are situations where positive reinforcement alone is not effective. For the safety and happiness of so many deserving dogs, I ask that you oppose the legislation to ban the use of e-collars.

Sincerely,
Marybeth [REDACTED]