

# HOUSE BILL 1568

L6

6lr3546

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By: **Delegate Ross**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Local Government – Animal Control – Dogs At Large**  
3 **(Dog Leash Laws)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring each county and municipality to adopt local laws or  
5 regulations prohibiting a dog from being at large; and generally relating to local laws  
6 regulating animal control.

7 BY adding to  
8 Article – Local Government  
9 Section 1–1321  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2013 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Local Government**

15 **1–1321.**

16 **(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES.**

17 **(B) EACH COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITY SHALL ADOPT A LOCAL LAW:**

18 **(1) PROHIBITING THE OWNER OF A DOG FROM ALLOWING A DOG TO**  
19 **BE AT LARGE;**

20 **(2) ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR THE IMPOUNDMENT OF A DOG**  
21 **FOUND AT LARGE BY AN ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT OR OTHER ENFORCEMENT ENTITY;**  
22 **AND**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1                   **(3) ESTABLISHING PENALTIES FOR A VIOLATION, INCLUDING CIVIL**  
2 **AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES.**

3                   **(C) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO PREEMPT A LOCAL**  
4 **GOVERNMENT FROM ENACTING AND ENFORCING MORE STRINGENT MEASURES**  
5 **THAN THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.**

6                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That it is the intent of the General  
7 Assembly that this Act be applied and interpreted to recognize the definition of the term  
8 “running at large” as used by the Appellate Court of Maryland in *Blitzer v. Breski*, 259 Md.  
9 App. 257 (2023).

10                   SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
11 October 1, 2026.