



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

Washington Square Building, Suite 1025  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Phone: 517/373-6466

**ASSESSMENT OF DAMAGE BY DOGS**

House Bill 4164 as introduced  
First Analysis (3-20-89)

May 23 1989  
Mich. State Law Library

Sponsor: Rep. Gary L. Randall  
Committee: Towns and Counties

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

The Dog Law of 1919 requires township supervisors or township trustees to assess reported damage to livestock by dogs. Since most township supervisors and trustees work full-time jobs during the daytime, this means that the only time they have to carry out this responsibility is when they get home in the evening after work. During the winter months, however, when it gets dark as early as five o'clock in the afternoon, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for these township officials to adequately inspect damage caused by dogs. Some townships have requested that legislation be introduced that would allow township boards to appoint qualified people to carry out this inspection.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend the Dog Law of 1919 to allow inspection of livestock damage caused by dogs to be carried out by township supervisors, township officers, or by other qualified people designated by the township board.

MCL 287.280

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

Fiscal information is not available. (3-16-89)

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

Presently the law imposes unnecessary hardships on township officials, especially on officials in the smaller, rural townships where real problems still exist with dogs causing damage to livestock. If township supervisors or trustees work all day and can only go in the evenings to inspect damage caused by dogs, as required by law, their jobs are complicated in the winter months when darkness comes relatively early in the day. By allowing township boards to designate qualified people (such as animal control officers) to perform this duty, the bill would relieve township officials of an unnecessary burden and facilitate the townships' handling of the problem of damage to livestock caused by dogs. What is more, by allowing township boards to designate someone such as a dog warden to assess damage caused by dogs, the bill would allow townships to utilize the expertise of animal control personnel in an appropriate manner.

***POSITIONS:***

The Michigan Townships Association supports the bill.  
(3-16-89)