

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **House Bill 4054**

By Delegate Pritt

[Introduced January 14, 2026; referred to the

Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §19-20-20 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to prohibiting the keeping any vicious pet and permitting a vicious pet to be killed.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 20. DOGS, AND CATS, AND OTHER PETS.**

**§19-20-20. Keeping vicious dogs pets; humane officers may kill such dogs pets.**

1 Except as provided in section twenty-one of this article §19-20-21 of this code, no person  
2 shall own, keep, or harbor any ~~dog~~ pet known by him or her to be vicious, dangerous, or in the  
3 habit of biting or attacking ~~other persons~~ people, whether or not such ~~dog~~ pet wears a tag or  
4 muzzle. Upon satisfactory proof before a circuit court or magistrate that such ~~dog~~ pet is vicious,  
5 dangerous, or in the habit of biting or attacking ~~other persons~~ people or other dogs or animals, the  
6 judge may authorize the humane officer to cause such ~~dog~~ pet to be killed.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to prohibit the ownership of any vicious pet.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law  
and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.