

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# Chief David Nisleit Issues Statement on Proposed Assembly Bill 742 Regarding Police Canines

**SAN DIEGO** – San Diego Police Chief David Nisleit issued the following statement today on the proposed Assembly Bill 742 (AB 742), which would prohibit and restrict the use of police canines.

**Chief Nisleit Statement:**

“The proposed California State Assembly Bill 742 is another flawed attempt by state legislators to reduce racial disparities and use of force in policing.

Since 1984, SDPD has used police K-9’s to locate and apprehend suspects in circumstances that are exceedingly dangerous for officers, such as searching in dark canyons, buildings, homes, or vehicles, where a concealed suspect maintains an advantage over officers. The K-9 affords officers time and distance to better analyze the situation and respond appropriately from a safer distance.

SDPD has an extensive selection, academy and training program for canine handlers that exceeds California P.O.S.T. requirements. SDPD has policies and procedures which outline how and when K-9’s can be used in the field as well as procedures for review of every apprehension using a K-9.

The vast majority of K-9 deployments in San Diego are for de-escalating dangerous/volatile incidents with confrontational, irrational, armed and/or suicidal subjects that fail to respond to the presence and direction of uniformed officers. Handlers are required to issue K-9 warnings to suspects and often, the warnings are repeated multiple times throughout an incident before a K-9 is released for apprehension.

Over the past 5 years, SDPD K9’s were used at 10,815 calls for service and accounted for 927 subjects complying with officers after just the *mere presence* of the K-9. In only 1% of the calls over the last 5 years,

did the suspect ignore the K-9 warnings, refuse to surrender and, as a result, was bitten. No SDPD K-9 deployment has resulted in death or life-threatening injury.

AB 742 wrongly categorizes a police K-9 as deadly force, considering the K-9 no different than a firearm. Categorizing the K-9's in this manner is misguided and would eliminate a valuable de-escalation tool in instances where other tools may have failed, but deadly force is not warranted.

The passage of AB 742 will put officers into more dangerous situations without a de-escalation tool that is capable of apprehending violent suspects without the use of a firearm.

The unintended consequence of this piece of legislation will be an increase in officer-involved shootings, officer and suspect injury, and increased threats to community safety.

I urge our legislators to keep this tool intact for the safety of our officers and the communities they serve."

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