**TKC Legislative Liaison Report - February 4, 2017 - General Meeting**

**Senate Bill 77-** Starting June 1, 2017, and only in Anne Arundel & Harford counties, a pilot program will be using dogs in civil courtrooms to assist child witnesses.

Both dog and handler must have graduated from an accredited organization such as Assistance Dogs International. The team’s goal is to provide affection and comfort to children who need emotional support while testifying in court. Pets On Wheels is noted as an accredited organization.

The trial program is up for evaluation September 30, 2019. Barring any dramatic issues, the program can then continue throughout the state of Maryland. This is a perfect opportunity for our members to train and get accredited should they wish to participate.

**Senate Bill 143 -**  Effective October 1, 2017, any person who intentionally causes an injury to or death of a pet, will be liable to the owner of the pet for compensatory damages. In the case of an injury to a pet, it is the reasonable andnecessary cost of veterinary care. In the case of death, the owner is to receive fair market value of the pet before death, and the reasonable and necessary cost of veterinary care.

Thanks for your concern and participation in this Great Club!

Diane Horowitz, Your AKC Legislative Liaison