



## Saskatchewan New Democratic Party Caucus

Room 265, Legislative Building  
Regina, SK S4S 0B3  
Phone: 306-787-7388  
Fax: 306-787-6247  
E-mail: caucus@ndpcaucus.sk.ca  
Website: www.ndpcaucus.sk.ca

---

### NEWS RELEASE

#### **NDP Introduces Bill to Protect Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals**

Posted: November 22, 2010

NDP MLA for Saskatoon Centre David Forbes today introduced a Private Member's Bill which would enhance the protection of service animals in Saskatchewan such as police dogs and guide dogs for those living with disabilities. Forbes said the public nature of the work service animals do and the high risks taken by police dogs in particular were the catalysts behind the bill.

"Service animals provide an invaluable and, on occasion, lifesaving service to people with disabilities and law enforcement agencies," Forbes said. "Their unique skills and ability to enhance the quality of life for many and the dangers to which they are often exposed make them uniquely deserving of protection under the law."

Forbes said the proposed Bill is based on legislation which currently exists in Manitoba. He noted that Ontario, British Columbia, and 16 American states have followed their lead and passed what is often referred to as "Layla's Law" in reference to a service dog that was repeatedly accosted by an aggressive dog in Washington State in 2001. If passed, the law would allow for significant fines, compensation orders, and, if necessary, animal obedience training for animals involved in the harassment or harm of a service animal.

"Animal protection laws as they exist or being proposed simply don't address the unique circumstances involved in working with or caring for a service animal," Forbes said. "Retraining or caring for a service animal that has been the victim of violence or harassment is an expensive and time-consuming process that users of service animals and police officers simply can't afford."

Forbes said he has received support for the bill from both disability advocate groups and law enforcement agencies. Organizations such as the Canadian Police Canine Association, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and the Guide Dog Users of Canada have all pushed for the introduction of this bill.

"We're happy to have the support of these organizations and the members they represent," Forbes said. "We hope this bill will go a long way in protecting the interests of service animals and will allow them to continue the effective job they do in assisting and protecting our citizens."

-30-