

# Governor signs bill creating police dog retirement act

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*Allows K-9 police dogs to remain with partner in retirement*

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Bruce Rauner today took action on SB 3129, creating the Police Dog Retirement Act. The act will allow all K-9 police dogs that are deemed no longer fit for public service to be offered first to the handler on the force. The Governor signed the bill on First Responders Day at the 2016 State Fair during a ceremony at the Illinois State Police Tent.

“They may not look like our typical officers, but K-9 police dogs are crucial to how our first responders do their jobs,” Governor Rauner said. “They are partners and team members. They quickly become a part of the family, and they should be allowed to stay with that family, even after retirement.”

The Governor was joined at the ceremony by Illinois State Police Director Leo Schmitz along with K-9 officers and their handlers who were on-duty protecting fair goers.

"Canine handlers and their partners form a special bond as they face many challenges together," said ISP Director Leo Schmitz. "The signing of the Canine bill recognizes this special bond and provides both the handler and the canine the ability to remain together following their service to the citizens of Illinois."

To further honor First Responders Day, Governor Rauner signed two additional bills. HB 5018 designates the second week of April as National Public Safety Telecommunicators' Week to honor the men and women behind the scenes who answer 911 calls and dispatch emergency responders. SB 2947 protects all emergency medical services personnel. The bill amends the Criminal Code of 2012 that redefines various statutes concerning bodily harm directed against emergency medical services personnel to include all members of the ambulance crew including drivers and pilots.

Gov. Rauner also took action on the following bills:

**Bill No.: HB 5538**

An Act Concerning Domestic Violence

Action: Signed

Effective: January 1, 2017

**Bill No.: HB 5611**

An Act Concerning Local Government

Action: Signed

Effective: January 1, 2017

**Bill No.: HB 5649**

An Act Concerning Transportation

Action: Signed

Effective: January 1, 2017

**Bill No.: SB 2431**

An Act Concerning Transportation

Action: Signed

Effective: January 1, 2017