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Sen. Hancock Files Fido-Friendly Outdoor Dining Act

SB 476 would allow dogs on patios, other outdoor dining areas if restaurants opt in

AUSTIN, TX - Sen. Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) recently filed legislation allowing restaurant patrons to be accompanied by a well-behaved and well-controlled dog in an outdoor dining area such as a patio or sidewalk café.

SB 476 would not require restaurants to permit dogs in outdoor dining areas, but provides that food service establishments statewide may do so if they choose.

"On a nice day, there's not much that beats finding an outdoor patio and enjoying a meal with friends or family," said Hancock. "For many Texans, dogs are part of the family, and restaurants that want to welcome them in outside areas should be able to do that without having to worry about extra expenses and over-the-top government regulation."

While many restaurants with outdoor dining options already allow patrons to bring along their furry friends, certain cities have enacted onerous restrictions on these establishments including dog variance applications, periodic fees, extra inspections, and burdensome rules.

SB 476 closely mirrors the relatively permissive municipal regulation on this issue in the City of Austin. It allows food service establishments to permit a customer to be accompanied by a dog in an outdoor dining area as long as: the establishment posts a sign stating that dogs are permitted, the dog doesn't go inside the restaurant, the customer keeps the dog on a leash and under control, the dog isn't allowed on top of chairs or tables, and no food preparation takes place in the outdoor area.

To read the full text of the bill and follow its progress, visit Texas Legislature Online at <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

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Sen. Hancock represents [District 9](#), which includes portions of Dallas and Tarrant Counties. He currently serves as Chairman of the Texas Senate Committee on Business & Commerce and Vice Chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Transportation.