



Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League

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Proudly helping great danes since 1979 in NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, and NC

Fed. Tax ID # 52-1177018

Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement
Attn: Ms. Mary Bender
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
2301 North Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408

Dear Ms. Bender:

I am the President of a multi-state rescue organization for Great Danes. I reside in Pennsylvania and oversee our operations on a daily basis here. I am writing to comment on the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations.

As you would expect, I am all for regulations that will help shut down the puppy mills in our State. However, I do not believe that these proposed regulations would be of any benefit. In fact they will hinder organizations like ours.

I am especially concerned with the section concerning "temporary housing". Groups like ours do not own kennels but in fact use a system of "foster homes". We have about 20 foster homes state wide each housing 1 foster Dane at a time and when taken in total for the year we could easily go over the 26 number limit of dogs in our care for the year. Not one of these homes is a kennel or anything close, and we could never either personally or as an organization bring any one of these homes into compliance with the new kennel standards, let alone all twenty. We are of 501© 3 organization that relies on donations to keep going. There is no money to convert someone's home into a kennel for the care of a single dog.

Our breed does not do well in kennel situations which is why we use a foster home system. If we would be forced to try and comply with the new regulations it would shut our organization down within the State of Pennsylvania, thereby adding to the already overwhelming burden of the locally run SPCA and shelters. Which I might add is rarely equipped to handle giant breed dogs like ours. We are usually notified immediately by the local shelters when one of our breed comes into their facilities as they just can't handle and animal of that size.

These new regulations are written in such a way that the only people who will be able to comply with them are the large commercial kennels. You will be putting all the good "hobby" breeders out of business, thereby leaving the general public with no where to buy a quality pet but from a pet store and the puppy mills. I'm sure that is not the State's intention, but that is exactly what will happen.

The Bureau has conceded in the past that it has not adequately enforced the current regulations. Based on the news stories of the last several days, they can be and are being enforced when properly staffed.

My concerns only address one aspect of the proposed new regulations; there are many more deficiencies within these new regulations. And to that end, please know that I associated myself with the more detailed comments by the Pennsylvania Federation of Dog Clubs. I respectfully urge that this proposal be withdrawn.

Respectfully yours,

Kathleen G. Shea
President

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