

Ms. Mary Bender
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
2301 North Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Re. Doc. No. 06-2452

2559

Dear Ms. Bender,

The breeder of my sheltie has brought to my attention the newly proposed dog law. As a person who cares very deeply about my beloved sheltie, I would like to express my concerns about these proposed changes.

I purchased my dog directly from a reputable breeder, not from a pet shop, shelter, or rescue because I wanted to know that my dog would have a good temperament and be healthy. Shelties have a reputation as being shy and noise sensitive. I wanted to know that my dog had been exposed to different situations and was prepared to live the life as a family pet. By purchasing directly from a breeder I was able to see the conditions the dog was raised in. My breeder raises her dogs in the house and works hard to provide the puppies with attention that builds confidence. I know this because my puppy was content from the day I brought him home and has been a valuable new member of the family.

Upon reading your proposed changes I am primarily concerned about the "Kennels-Primary Enclosures" portion of this proposal. It is my understanding that in these proposed changes, if a cumulative total of 26 dogs are housed at "the Establishment" during a calendar year, then licensed breeders will have to build housing quarters to meet the specifications outlined in these proposed changes.

I credit my dog's good temperament to the love and attention my breeder gave her puppies. Most importantly to me, this included constant exposure to everyday life noises, sights and sounds.

1. My puppy was taken outside to potty on grass regularly. This was important to me and helped my puppy with the housebreaking process
2. My puppy was socialized with other dogs and is comfortable in our neighborhood setting where he sees, meets, and plays with other dogs of various breeds daily.
3. In a home situation my puppy was exposed to television, radio, dishwasher, clothes washer, drier, coffee machines, and many many other noises that occur regularly in my home.

While I applaud the efforts to improve the living conditions for those poor dogs that live in puppy mills, I feel it would be a greater service to those dogs to not allow "for profit" breeding to occur in the first place.

Your proposal is costly. You want to instill stiffer regulations for reputable breeders. This will only eliminate the good ones. (The loving ones) The breeders that care enough to share their home and teach the puppies to be well adjusted before they go to a new home. If a person cares enough about what they are purchasing, then they should visit a breeder and see if the environment is suitable.

What does not make sense to me is all the additional cost and paper work you're proposing. Our dog wardens should be spending their time investigating suspected puppy mills and shutting them down! Not giving them a slap on the wrist. Many times I see incidents where animals were abused over and over. The puppy mill was first given a warning and the incident was never followed up. Two years down the line, the same people are abusing these animals and just given a fine.

Instead of putting your efforts into rules that will ruin the efforts of good breeders, perhaps you should **spend more time proposing new rules for punishing puppy mills and backyard breeders.**

Forcing breeders to have to build housing quarters to meet the specifications outlined in these propose changes will force an "assembly" line personality in puppies. You are just encouraging glorified puppy mills.

Unfortunately, the AKC will have the names of the good breeders and these people will be the targets.... The Puppy Mills will go on.....

I propose a program to move forward and have a goal to shut down the mills and private "money makers". We need stiffer penalties for abusers. They need to know they have a consequence to face for their actions.

CUT THE PAPERWORK!!! NEEDLES SPENDING!!! LET'S HELP THOSE THAT NEED IT AND APPLAUD THOSE THAT DON'T!

Sincerely,

Leah A. Lockard