

Connie Winters' Kennels
The Vacation Spa for Pets
495 Winterfield Rd., Indiana Pa
(724) 465-6120 or (724)465-6678
Jan 25, 2007

2559

Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Attn: Arthur Coccodrilli, Chairman
333 Market St, 14th floor.
Harrisburg, Pa. 17101

Dear Mr. Coccodrilli,

As a forty year plus, boarding kennel owner and a member of ABKA since 1977, I would like to voice my concerns regarding the PA. Dept. of Agriculture's proposed amendments to the Dog Law. I believe that all kennel facilities will find many of these amendments extremely difficult to execute in a timely fashion. My most serious concern is the daily record keeping proposals. I fully believe in an exercise requirement and daily cleaning, but I would prefer that my staff be out there cleaning runs and exercising the dogs instead of dealing with the proposed record keeping which is both cumbersome and ineffective if these records must be kept on paper. My kennel is computerized at great cost, to allow my staff to be able to track all of our contact with a client's dog from reservation to departure. There are several good computer programs on the market for kennel use, why would the Dept. want to take this wonderful tool away from kennel operators and their staff, when it improves the quality of care so much.

I also have grave concerns for the privacy of my clients, if just any Dept. employee, State Dog Warden or Police Officer can walk in and copy the client names and addresses of current dogs in kennel. Obviously, in a boarding kennel situation, most if not all of the current clients are not at home. I would be very concerned if this list of clients were to be used for unlawful use once it leaves my control. I feel this regulation is a total disregard of my clients right to privacy.

I understand the need for strict rules for cleanliness and sanitation in the kennel setting, but requiring the constant use of disinfectants on a daily basis can contribute to so many environmental problems with water pollution, growing ineffectiveness of the disinfectant, and constant exposure of the dogs and kennel staff to the chemicals used. I believe some sort of cleaning protocol suggestions would be more effective in saving our environment and allow kennel owners some flexibility is using a daily cleaning protocol that works for their facility.

Every kennel facility is different in its design, layout, its intended use and its problem areas, an educated kennel management staff is the key to better care, not more cumbersome regulations. If the Dept of Agriculture's goal is to shut down all dog breeding and boarding kennels in the state of Pennsylvania, they are headed in the right direction. But I believe this will have the opposite effect on the dog control issues. If the well managed kennels are put out of business by these new regulations (either by facility upgrade costs or inability to cope with the paperwork requirements) the general public will either have to pay substantially more for fewer spaces at boarding facilities or resort to the untrained neighborhood kids. The result will be more dog bites, more loose dogs and more strain on the already overloaded shelters, which puts the dog back in a crowded environment in a smaller cage. If the careful and caring breeder is driven out of business by these

RECEIVED
2007 FEB -2 AM 10:58
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

regulations, people will just go out to state puppy mills or resort to buying puppies from uneducated and unregulated "backyard" breeders who think having a litter of puppies is a good education for their children. When these puppies become older and have mental or physical problems they will also end up on the dangerous dog list or in the shelters. How is this improving the quality of care of our dogs in Pennsylvania? Continued education is the KEY, not regulation!

Thank you for your time, I hope that the Dept of Agriculture will reconsider these regulations which will have such a profound negative affect on both the breeding and boarding kennel industries of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Connie Winters".

Connie Winters (Pres.)
Connie Winters' Kennels, Inc.