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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

February 5, 2007

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

RE: ID#2-152 (#2559)

Dear Ms. Bender:

As a former show dog breeder and a twenty-year member of the board of directors of the Humane Society in Susquehanna County, I applaud the effort to improve conditions for dogs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The disgrace of puppy mills which were formerly (I hope it is formerly) promoted by Penn State as a legitimate form of agriculture, unscrupulous backyard breeders who scam the public with unhealthy, overpriced pseudo-breeds, and the lack of enforcement of the current laws have been particular thorns in my side for years. These conditions, and the very low license fees, are known throughout the country and Pennsylvania is looked down upon as not progressive in its treatment of animals.

The proposed new regulations should be no problem to follow, with the caveat that the employees of the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement be allowed to enforce them with a dose of common sense. Legitimate boarding and show kennels should not fear these new proposals once they have read them carefully.

The biggest impediment to bettering conditions for dogs, in my opinion, is the understaffing of the Bureau, and the reluctance of the officers to enforce laws where deplorable conditions exist, particularly on a repetitive basis. Repeated warnings about lack of licenses, both kennel and individual, and lax enforcement of the all-important rabies law has led to abuses of the right to own an animal. An increase in the dog license fee could be directed to improve staffing. This is critical, I feel, for more frequent inspections, as record keeping by kennel owners who intend to circumvent the law can be falsified.

Thank you for your attention and for this step to improve the lot of dogs in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely;

Ann Vitale