

February 6, 2007

Pennsylvania—nicknamed the "puppy mill capitol of the East" because so many puppy mills call the state home.

As a Pennsylvanian and a caring person, I cringe every time I think of this situation, unethical breeders profiting off the misery of puppies and dogs, to such a large degree that the whole country is aware of the plight of these animals, and the apathy of our state towards it. Could it be my cringing days are over?

Thanks to Governor Ed Rendell's commitment to help the tens of thousands of dogs affected by Pennsylvania puppy mills, the issue has been getting a lot of attention. Last December, changes to kennel regulations were proposed that could strengthen the inspection of commercial breeding operations in Pennsylvania, and perhaps help us to lose our shameful nickname.

These changes include:

- ❖ doubling the minimum cage size
- ❖ requiring daily exercise outside of the cage
- ❖ required heat when the temperature drops below 50 degrees
- ❖ required cooling (by fan or air conditioning) when the temperature rises above 85 degrees
- ❖ improving ventilation in kennel areas
- ❖ denying kennel licenses to individuals convicted of animal cruelty within the past 10 years

I strongly support the provisions listed above, and the detailed comments submitted by The Humane Society of the United States.

Additionally, I would mention that, due to the addition of a new definition of "temporary home", you should consider exemption for humane rescue shelters from some of the size and exercise requirements, as well as to foster homes for kennel housing requirements. Instead, a separate set of performance standards appropriate for home care settings - which are rescue-oriented and not commercial breeding operations - should be written.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Let's hope this is the year we shed our "Puppy Mill capitol of the East" nickname, and do something to improve and enforce kennel conditions.



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