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Kimberley A Heller RECEIVED

131 Lake Road
Berwick, PA. 18603
kh01@carvexpress.net

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

February 7, 2007

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

Ms. Bender,

I am writing to you in reference to some of the proposed changes to current Dog Laws in Pennsylvania. I understand that you are concerned for the safety of animals, and their well being, just as I am. I have some serious concerns with changes to these laws however. I felt the need to send a letter to address these concerns. Please take a minute to read the contents of my letter and possibly reconsider your decision.

First allow me to explain why I am writing this letter. I currently have four Therapy Dogs. This is not something that I take lightly, and it has become one of the most enjoyable aspects of my life. Many hours of classes and training has been put into my dogs. My dogs enjoy the chance to go to Nursing Homes and Hospitals to visit in some cases people who get no other visitors. I also enjoy this opportunity to step away from my everyday problems and focus on people who need the attention much more than I do.

My concerns with the proposed changes are numerous to name a few:

- 1. It is my understanding that the proposed changes would allow Humane Society Officials to seize animals without a warrant. I understand and respect the work that these officials do on a daily basis, however I believe that such a change would be against my rights as a law abiding citizen. I take very good care of my animals, and would never be able to deal with the possibility of some one, any one being able to seize my animals, just because they see fit. I believe that is putting a rather large responsibility on the official's shoulders. I believe that if an animal ever needs to be seized there should be a process that should be followed, not just*

going on to some ones property and taking the animal. I am aware that the statement being made is that the seizures would only be done if necessary, however I don't believe that such a decision should be left in one persons hands without them being required to go through a process first.

2. I also understand that in the proposed changes there is a regulation on dogs of different sizes playing together and interacting. In my house alone I have dogs of different sizes. This piece in itself could destroy the work that hundreds of therapy dogs do on a daily basis, as therapy dogs come in all shapes and sizes, as well as from many different breeds. I think it is important for you to understand the service that a therapy dog provides when visiting Nursing Homes, Hospitals, etc.. I believe in some cases the volunteers and their dogs are the only visitors that some people get. I never force people to visit with my dogs, but I know that many of these people look forward to our visits, and I would never want to see a bill passed that could put this in jeopardy.

I hope that you have looked at my concerns and will reconsider your stance on this bill. I truly love my animals and would never want any harm to come to them. I can not imagine having any one of them removed from me. I believe that we need to enforce our existing laws, not pass such proposals. I do believe that we need responsible owners, and breeders; however I can not see the advantage to allowing said proposals to become law. I would love to see more time and money being spent on training animal awareness and responsible ownership.

Sincerely,


Kim Heller