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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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

Dear Ms. Bender,

I am an eleven year resident of Lancaster County, and live in Manheim Twp. Happily, we have no puppy mills (I hope). For the past eight years, I have driven a school bus throughout the county and among the many farms. I have also delivered flowers for several of the local florists so I have the occasion to see how dogs, horses and cattle are treated.

I have seen dogs in elevated caged runs, or tied on a short rope to their dog houses so they cannot reach sunshine in the winter or cool shade in the summer. I have seen horses (remainders) forced to stand in freezing mud and water crowded together under shed overhangs during winter months until they are disposed of. Who are these people? When accosted, they quote the Bible passages their Bishop gives them. If law and the State don't protect these creatures, who will? Where is the enforcement of existing laws?

Many of the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations are excellent, but you have left out "permanent tethering can not be used as a primary closure". The UAPM feels strongly about this and so do I.

On the other hand, the Lancaster Kennel Club is concerned about several proposed regulatory changes which would not have a necessarily beneficial outcome if adopted. Some of these would not improve the life of a kenneled dog and in fact, would impact heavily on small hobby and show breeders who may already provide superior care and would be overburdened by record keeping. I urge you to have in your decision making process a roundtable of vets, members of county AKC kennel clubs, and of course, United Against Puppy Mills.

Please remove the cultivation of dogs from under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture since their supervision has led to state wide neglect and abuse. The convenience of the farmers does not take precedence over the welfare of animals. The dog industry is so important and so full of conflict, that surely there should be a separate department to oversee and inspect law compliance and kennel quality of life.

I would be more than happy to volunteer to be a dog warden. It should not be a political appointment. I wouldn't warn the farmers I was coming to call, and I wouldn't be taking supper at an Amish farm while boxes of dogs and puppies are stacked in a freezing barn.

Thank you for your consideration.

Margo Sue Metzger
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