

Ms Rebecca Panzak, CPDT
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Freeport, PA 16229
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement
Attn: Ms Mary Bender, Director
Pennsylvania Dept of Agriculture
2301 North Cameron St Room 102
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408

Dear Ms Bender:

I currently own a rescued Great Dane, who attends daily day care while I work and who competes in obedience, agility, rally obedience, as well as being a trained therapy dog. I, myself, am a certified pet dog trainer with the Association of Pet Dog Trainers.

I am writing to comment on the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations issued on December 16th. While I do believe that inhumane and substandard kennel conditions should not be tolerated, I feel that many of the proposed changes would definitely have a negative impact, as well as being discriminatory towards me owning a large breed dog.

For example, many existing kennels and boarding facilities would not be in compliance with the new standards as far as space needed for my dog. Any that would be would probably have to charge exorbitant fees for that much space, impacting my ability to travel.

Also, the new regulations would impact many rescue groups who foster dogs in private homes. Dogs, especially large breed dogs, need to be extensively socialized. It is far better to have these dogs in homes on carpeting, furniture and the normalities of family life than to be stuck in a kennel on concrete. Danes on concrete develop a host of health conditions, and acquire bare spots from fur being rubbed off.

As a dog fancier, I would much rather buy from a reputable breeder who has raised puppies in their home, well socialized to family life than a breeder who keeps their puppies in a concrete kennel away from everything.

My dog attends daily day care where she plays with all sizes of dogs. One of her favorite playmates is a pug. Being a performance dog, this is important to me as she is exposed to all shapes and sizes in the show ring. Also, my day care facility is carpeted with couches available, just like home. Again, being a performance dog, the type of flooring available is important as running and jumping all day on concrete would negatively impact my dog's joints and inhibit her performance in agility. The carpeting is well maintained and cleaned regularly. My dog is crated for a brief time in the morning, sometimes at lunch and again during pickup times. Her crate there is the same as her crate in my car; she has just enough room to stand, turn around and lay down, which is adequate for the brief times she is crated.

This day care also offers cage free boarding where someone sleeps with the dogs at night. Again, there are sometimes several dogs of varying sizes and she has almost all the comforts of home, which is less stressful for her while I'm away.

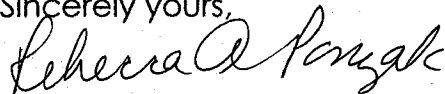
If these changes are passed, my day care/boarding facility will probably have to close. They get too few dogs to separate by size, and even if they could, my dog would have to play by herself. If they close, my dog will have to be crated all day while I'm at work, which will definitely not be better for her than attending day care.

I just cannot see how the proposed changes would correct the puppy mill situation, but only negatively effect breeders, trainers, day care owners and boarding kennels who already have the dog's best interests at heart. Yes, change is needed, but not at the dog's expense. Requiring all puppies to be microchipped so they can be tracked and studied for health issues would help.

I'm sure the above is far from complete, but is one owner's perception on how this will negatively impact her dog.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Rebecca A Panzak, CPDT