

February 12, 2007

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

Arthur Coccodrilli, Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Ms. Bender and Mr. Coccodrilli:

First, I would like to thank Governor Ed Rendell for his commitment to help the tens of thousands of dogs who suffer in Pennsylvania puppy mills. I volunteer with an animal rescue group in Central New Jersey who has fostered some of the dogs surrendered by the mills. I'll spare you the gory details as I'm sure you've heard it all, but suffice it to say that the stories you have heard are most definitely true.

The reason for this letter is to show my support for the proposed changes to the outdated kennel regulations currently used to inspect commercial breeding operations in Pennsylvania. Specifically, I strongly support the following changes:

- More specific and more stringent food, water, bedding and sanitation requirements to address the control of contagious diseases and to assure dogs have access to water at all times;
- Doubling the minimum cage size;
- Heat when temperatures drop below 50 degrees;
- Cooling by air conditioning or fan when temperatures rise above 85 degrees;
- Improved ventilation in kennel areas; and
- Denying kennel licenses to individuals convicted of animal cruelty within the past 10 years.

In addition, I urge you to seriously consider the detailed comments submitted by the Humane Society of the United States.

I am concerned, however, that animal shelters and animal rescue groups may be affected by the kennel regulations due to the addition of a new definition for "temporary home." Therefore, I would ask that shelters be exempt from the kennel expansion and exercise requirements, as well as foster homes be exempt from kennel housing requirements and instead have separate performance standards appropriate for a home care setting.

By copy of this letter, I am asking my state Senator and Representative for their support in favor of the proposed changes to the regulations.

I hope and pray that the support of this letter and letters like it will urge the State of Pennsylvania to enact the changes to the outdated kennel regulations, with the exception of animal shelters and rescue groups as noted above. Is it too much to ask for a little sanitation, comfort, fresh food and water for the animals that are making these millers so much money? I don't think so. I hope you don't either.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice Martino".

Janice Martino

/jm

cc: Senator Walter Kavanaugh
Assemblyman Kip Bateman