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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement
2301 N. Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408

Attention: Mary Bender

I read with great interest the article in the Intelligencer Journal regarding the testimony presented at the hearing Tuesday before the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee regarding the first draft of the proposed changes to the Pennsylvania kennel regulations. I feel Governor Ed Rendell's initiative to improve Pennsylvania's kennels right on target.

I would question whom Anne Irwin really represents because she certainly does not have the welfare of the dogs as uppermost in her statements; she instead is more interested in the welfare and cost of these changes to the breeders to be able to profit. Whose side is she on? It is pretty obvious it is not the side of the puppies.

Rep. Rob W. Kauffman of Cumberland and Franklin Counties is right on when he supports pretty much the whole document, as do my husband and I.

Has Rep. Jim Cox of Berks County visited any puppy mills? Apparently not. He wants to put the responsibility onto the consumer and suggests they choose "healthy" dogs, not "dispirited" dogs. If dogs are moping around, apparently they are unhealthy because of the conditions in which they are raised. This is not the fault or responsibility of the consumer, rather the responsibility of the money-hungry breeder who gets \$400 on up for each puppy but does not want to put any money into the welfare of the dogs.

Rep. Mark Keller of Perry County is also trying to blame the consumer speculating that they don't know how to care for the dog, consequently making the dog sick. These people are grasping at straws trying to protect the breeders, not the poor defenseless dogs and I have to ask myself why? It is pretty obvious why.

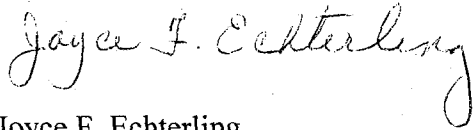
As far as lobbyist Ken Brandt saying that customers have told him that Pennsylvania puppies are the healthiest in the United States, I could almost laugh at him if it wouldn't be such a sad state of affairs for those puppies. When is the last time he has visited a puppy mill?

My husband and I firmly support all of Governor Ed Rendell's proposed changes to Pennsylvania's kennel regulations and would like to see them go forward. If breeders want to be in this lucrative business, then they should be forced to treat these animals humanely and if they can't, they should get out of the business.

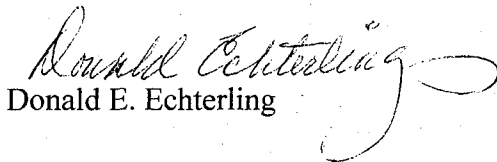
I suggest they raise llamas. I have heard this is also a lucrative business and llamas would take less care and they wouldn't have to have kennels. All they would have to do is let them graze like cattle and feed them periodically.

Please, please, please save the puppies. Let Gov. Rendell's proposed changes to the regulations for Pennsylvania kennels pass. It is imperative for the health and welfare of these poor defenseless puppies as well as the reputation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Very truly yours,



Joyce F. Echterling



Donald E. Echterling