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133 Beth Drive
Lansdale, PA 19446-5254
March 8, 2007

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

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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Dear Ms. Bender:

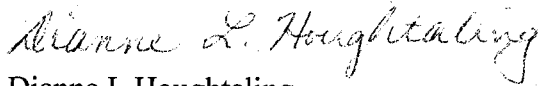
This letter is in response to the televised meeting of the PA Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee (3/6/2007) to discuss the new proposed amendments to the Kennel Regulations, Title 7 of the PA Code Chapters 21, 23, 25, and 27. I have written to you previously this year expressing my support for the proposed changes to the Dog Law. Once again, I applaud Governor Rendell and your efforts to improve the lives of these poor creatures. Some of the proposed changes, such as improved sanitary conditions, an increase in permissible cage size, and required daily out-of cage exercise, would directly impact the daily lives of breeder dogs. These recommendations are commendable. The breeder dogs live their entire lives in caged misery. Upon viewing the meeting, I was appalled at how the committee reacted to these recommendations. I was very disturbed at the constant references to "crops of dogs" and breeding dogs for "people to make money", all in the name of "free enterprise". The constant complaint of "how much this is going to cost" bordered on tedium. These changes in commercial breeding kennels would significantly improve the lives of the dogs caged there. The out-of-pocket expense would only occur ONE time. After the initial kennel upgrade, the dollars earned from their "crops of dogs" would be all profit. Please do not compromise on the previously mentioned upgrades. I have volunteered with rescue groups and have seen for myself the behaviors, such as spinning in circles, elicited by dogs kept in small cages. I have also witnessed the rotten/missing teeth of dogs whose only option is to drink through a tube. These creatures have been modified by "man" throughout history to be COMPANION ANIMALS, part of the family, not "crops". Additionally, adopting the USDA standard for animal care, which is a minimum standard at best, is not acceptable. I also do not believe that "having a veterinarian sign off on a crop of puppies" is an improvement in the standard. That is part of the standard now. A veterinarian (assuming he/she is ethical) giving a "crop of puppies" a bill of good health in no way guarantees a healthy adult dog. Many genetic defects do not make themselves known until the dog has reached adulthood. By that time, it is too late. The horrible cycle of substandard dogs breeding even more substandard puppies which are then sold to an uninformed and uneducated public in pet stores continues. This is not the appropriate agenda for the discussion of "pet shop puppies", so I will let that sleeping dog lie. However, I would be

in favor of (ethical) veterinarians being a part of the education of the breeders, just not the sole evaluators of the validity of the kennel operations.

I would also hope the bureau recommends some leeway for shelters and rescue groups who are non-profit. These folks are involved with companion animals because of their love for them, not "to make money in the name of free enterprise".

In closing, I would like to thank you for your time.

Respectfully,



Dianne L Houghtaling
133 Beth Drive
Lansdale, PA 19446-5254
215.855.8494
Hoagie4711@hotmail.com

cc: Governor Edward G. Rendell