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March 8, 2007

2318 Rose Garden Road
Pittsburgh PA 15220
(412) 344-8257

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

RECEIVED
2007 MAR 16 PM 1:00
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Ms. Bender:

I am writing to comment on the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations. My wife exhibits dogs nearly every weekend at dog shows in obedience, agility and conformation events. Her entire paycheck is spent showing dogs and those dollars are often spent at Pennsylvania events. I expect the dogs she brings into our home as members of our family to be well socialized puppies that are healthy and were raised by a responsible breeder in their home.

This proposal would hurt hobby breeders who breed the best quality dogs, whom are the most socialized, easiest to train and go on to typically make the best family pets. As a Pennsylvania resident, I would not allow my wife to purchase a puppy raised the way the proposal requires. I would tell her to buy a puppy from a breeder in another state who could raise puppies in their home and properly socialize the puppies. I do not wish to ever housebreak a puppy that is exclusively raised in a kennel.

I do not agree with commercial kennels that house hundreds of poorly socialized dogs that are bred and make more poor quality puppies. Please make laws to close the PA puppy mills that breed for profit, not for the betterment of each breed of dogs. These commercial kennels usually have the poorest quality of dogs. The conditions some of these dogs are kept in are deplorable and inhumane.

Regarding the hobby breeders that typically have less than 50 adult dogs, these breeders are vital to the future of healthy dogs. These are the people who spend their lives, time and money, to improve dogs and the future of dogs. These people should be commended and not be subjected to vigorous regulations. Dogs should be allowed to play on grass and be raised in homes, so long as these raising them have sanitary conditions and use common sense.

My wife has many friends, in many states, that own 15-30 adult dogs that live in their homes and occasionally have litters of well planned puppies. These are toy dogs under 15 pounds. Their homes are clean and the dogs well kept. The dogs are members of their families. If the dogs didn't bark, many people would never know they had any dogs, much less the number they do have. The proposed definition of "temporary housing" would require thousands of small residential hobby and show-breeding households to become licensed and they could not possibly comply with the proposed regulations. There is no good reason to regulate responsible hobby breeders. The comments made by the Pennsylvania Federation of Dog Clubs seemed to be intelligent and well thought out. Please consider their comments, as well as my own.

The current proposal appears to force hobby breeders to keep well loved pets in kennels, rather than their homes, if they wish to continue to breed dogs and better the next generation of dogs. Dogs should be allowed in homes and allowed on grass. I urge that this proposal be withdrawn or rewritten with help from an organization that understands raising dogs in a responsible manner and how best to accomplish this.

Sincerely,


John W Leemhuis, Jr

CC: The Honorable Wayne D Fontana
The Honorable Thomas C Petrone
Pennsylvania Federation Of Dog Clubs