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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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RECEIVED

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

Dear Ms. Bender:

I am writing to comment on the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations. As a hobby, I exhibit dogs nearly every weekend at shows in obedience, agility and conformation events. My entire paycheck is spent showing dogs and those dollars are often spent at Pennsylvania events. I believe that substandard kennel conditions should not be tolerated. However, I do not agree that most of the proposed regulatory changes are needed, or would necessarily have any beneficial outcome if adopted. Many are impractical, excessively burdensome and costly, unenforceable, and/or will not improve the quality of life for the dogs in these kennels.

In the proposal, it would hurt the groups of hobby breeders who breed the best quality dogs, that are the most socialized, easiest to train and go on to typically make the best family pets. As a Pennsylvania resident, if I were shopping for a puppy and was forced to buy from the conditions these laws propose, I would choose to shop in another state for my future family companion. I do not wish to ever housebreak a puppy that is exclusively raised in a kennel. I also want my canine family members to be raised in a home environment and socialized daily by a breeder.

I do not agree with commercial kennels that house hundreds of poorly socialized dogs that go on to have even more poorly socialized and often unhealthy puppies. Please make laws to close the PA puppy mills and the Amish kennels that breed for profit, not for the betterment of each breed of dogs. These commercial kennels usually have the poorest quality of dogs and most of their breeding dogs should not be bred at all. 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 subjected to vigorous regulations. Dogs should be allowed to play on grass and be raised on homes, so long as the people doing it meet sanitation expectations and use common sense.

Please bear in mind that housing 25 dogs weighing less than 15 pounds each is very different than housing 25 dogs that weigh 100 pounds or more each. More smaller dogs can successfully be housed in a home with people while maintaining a sanitary environment. The definition of "temporary housing" would require thousands of small residential hobby and show-breeding households to become licensed which could not possibly comply with the regulations, and which there is no reason to regulate. 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 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,

Carol R Leemhuis

Carol R Leemhuis

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