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MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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

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DEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION
1907
March 8, 2007

Dear Ms. Bender,

I am writing on behalf of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America (MFHA) to express my displeasure over the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations.

The MFHA represents all the mounted foxhunting/coyote hunting in the US and Canada. We have over 20,000 members and hunts in 38 states. Founded in 1907; we monitor all mounted foxhunts. There are 14 hunts in Pennsylvania. We enforce good sporting practices, hound and horse care and good public relations.

The proposed kennel regulations issued December 16, 2006 go beyond common sense.

We fully support all efforts to assure dogs are kept in clean, healthy environments with proper care. We have no use for "puppy mills", but this law would shut down sporting dog kennels and be detrimental to breed enthusiasts who raise dogs in their own homes.

The regulations are unnecessarily specific, many times contradictory and burdensome. It has obvious indications it was written by animal rights organizations with hidden political agendas and not animal welfare organizations that want to assure dogs are proper kept and cared for.

There are far too many onerous, ineffective and unenforceable rules to sight each one. Just a few of the most ridiculous:

It is absurd to have a requirement to have a wall between each dog. Foxhounds are housed together with plenty of room. They are bred to run together and housing them together reinforces their pack instincts.

Since when do we want veterinarians to become big brothers and dictate the size of our shelters or how they are built? Veterinarians are medical animal doctors and no more qualified to dictate how to care for, train or keep an animal than someone who lives with and raises them. Their expertise is medical, not care breeding or anything else.

Where did the temperatures requiring fans and heating for floors come from? People don't have anywhere near the same requirements, and different breeds of dogs also have different requirements. An Alaskan Husky wouldn't have the same physical or nutritional requirement as a Chihuahua.

The distances and grades required for kennel construction are beyond common sense and will shut down many exceptionally good kennel facilities.

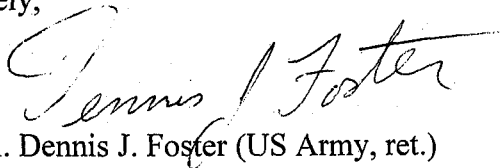
The exercise requirements have nothing to do with keeping a dog healthy or fit.

Everything from cleaning requirements to record keeping is unrealistic and would have no effect on a dog's health. Since when do dogs, or for that matter any animal, require water suitable for human consumption? Dogs will drink from streams, lakes and puddles on the ground or even your bathroom toilet if allowed to. Since when have there ever been any health problems resulting from the practice? I'm not advocating that dogs drink from the bathroom. All that is necessary is they have clean, fresh water available at all times.

This is a classic example of over regulation by people who do not understand dogs. It will have a drastic negative effect on good dog ownership and is definitely cost prohibitive and unenforceable.

If you want to get rid of puppy mills, put more money into law enforcement to uphold the laws already in place to counter their existence. If you want better conditions for all dogs ask the professional dog organizations for their advice and input. Your one-dog-fits-all philosophy makes no sense. Please look at what you're doing, who you're getting advice from and who it will affect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis J. Foster". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Lt. Col. Dennis J. Foster (US Army, ret.)
Executive Director