

PennAg Industries Association

Serving Agribusiness Since 1878

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March 8, 2007

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

Dear Ms. Bender:

I am writing on behalf of PennAg Industries Association expressing our concerns with the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations issued on December 16, 2006.

Our initial question relates to the process by which the amendments were developed. Was opportunity provided, in advance, for submission of accepted husbandry practices for kennels and input from the scientific community? Were the state veterinarian, representatives from The Pennsylvania State University, and The University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School active participants in the development of these proposed regulations?

The proposed regulations are clearly unreasonable and will create significant expense for kennel owners to achieve compliance. While the Department of Agriculture implies that the cost, per kennel, to meet the proposed regulations will range from \$10,000 to \$20,000, others have stated that costs of \$30,000 to \$100,000 are more realistic. This great disparity in the estimated costs and the economic impact on this important revenue source for farm families is a concern.

PennAg Industries Association recommends that the regulations be rewritten to provide reasonable best management practices, supported by scientific input as well as accepted husbandry practices, for kennels that can be achieved with minimal expense to kennel owners.

The proposed regulations, if enacted, will create severe hardship for hundreds of kennel owners, throughout Pennsylvania, who rely on the income derived from their kennels. Commercial kennels serve a need and should be encouraged to satisfy the market with healthy puppies by operating their kennels according to best management practices. The Commonwealth will be better served by assisting kennel operators to manage their kennels in accordance with standards that are acceptable and achievable.

The Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement has conceded that the current regulations have not been adequately enforced. If, after implementing the recently announced enhanced enforcement program, the Bureau finds it is still unable to adequately enforce the existing regulations, it should cite the specific deficiencies in the existing regulations and propose changes to address those problems. The current proposal appears to be a list of ideas to improve the environment for dogs with no basis in scientific fact or accepted husbandry practices.

Leading the Way

*Working to create and maintain an effective, viable, and competitive environment
for Pennsylvania Agribusiness to grow and prosper.*

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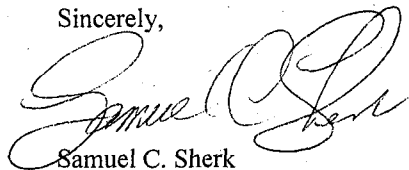


We strongly urge the Department to withdraw these proposed regulations, and modify the proposal to address the concerns previously identified.

Finally, we have a concern as it relates to the financial stability of the Bureau. The Department has stated that with annual revenue of \$6 million and expenses of more than \$10 million the Bureau has four years to continue to operate before existing reserves in the restricted fund are depleted. What is being planned to sustain the Bureau's continued long-term operation?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Samuel C. Sherk". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Samuel C. Sherk
Assistant Vice President

Copies to: Kristin Ebersole, Neil McAuliffe, Diane Main, Kerry Golden