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

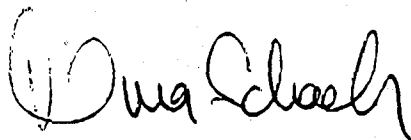
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Ms. Bender,

I am writing about some of my concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Dog Law's Rules and Regulations. There have been many letters citing specific examples of confusing language, excessive minutia of construction requirements and other details of the proposal. I will address my remarks to some of the generalities of the proposal.

1. There is no provision for a gradual phase-in of the requirements, especially regarding existing compliant kennel facilities. In many cases of construction code upgrades there is either a long period for the regulated community to reach compliance or else an exemption for those who are currently in compliance until or unless they either change the scope of their use of their establishment or apply for a permit for renovations. Therefore, I would suggest that there be an exemption from the construction requirements for all presently compliant facilities.
2. Nothing in the proposal recognizes the great variety of dog breeding practices, such as the differences between the commercial kennels and those which breed dogs for hobby, show and personal satisfaction or the preservation of the characteristics of certain breeds such as hunting dogs. Many breeders in this category raise their dogs in their homes and do not rely on sophisticated facilities, although they might reach the cumulative 26 dog threshold required for a kennel license. For this group of people I would suggest an exemption for dogs kept primarily in residential environments by their owners. Such dogs would be required to be individually licensed. Such situations would still be subject to oversight by the cruelty laws.
3. Although we have frequently heard that "it is not the intention" of the Bureau to regulate certain types of establishments, such as motels, campgrounds, dog shows, retirement communities and the like, the document does not specifically exempt them. I would like to see specific exemptions for such establishments where the dog accompanies its owner in overnight situations, or where no fee is charged for temporarily boarding a dog belonging to someone else.
4. While it is true that large numbers of dogs exercising on grass may create bare areas resulting in mud during rainy weather, this is not true of smaller kennels and dogs raised in homes. I believe they should be exempt from the restriction prohibiting exercise on grass.
5. The existing Statute recognizes various sizes and purposes of kennels. It does not make sense to have a "one size fits all" regulation. Any revision to the regulations should be written for each separate kennel type, whether they are the breeding kennels, shelters, boarding kennels, veterinary facilities, research or for the home owner who keeps and breeds dogs in a residential environment.

Sincerely,



Nina Schaefer
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Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006