

Mar. 9th, 2007

Dear Ms. Bender,

as a member of the DLAB, we have worked very hard to go over the proposed regulations very carefully, and will be submitting our amendments with consideration to both practical and humane concerns. We all recognize that this is a legal industry in Pennsylvania which needs regulating to insure the health and welfare of thousands of dogs. Our goal is to improve the lives of these unfortunate animals - even with the new regulations in place and being enforced the life of a dog in a K5 (or smaller) kennel is not going to be an enviable one.

In addition to signing on as a DLAB member, I would like to comment as a private citizen. It is my belief that most Pennsylvanians (including myself) think of dogs as companion animals, and certainly not "livestock" or a "cash crop," both of which they are considered by many of the largest breeders in the state.

The present legal conditions for these dogs are deplorable in my view, and desperately need to be improved. I have

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INDEPENDENT REGULATOR
PENNSYLVANIA

read and endorse the comprehensive and thoughtful comments of ASPCA.

I feel compelled to list in this letter the most essential changes:

- ① All wire flooring should be eliminated. Period. It is inhumane to keep dogs on wire - especially for their entire lives, which is the case for breeding stock in these large kennels. Resting boards needed immediately.
- ② Cage size must be doubled.
- ③ No more stacking of cages. This practice is a great source of stress to the dogs, and also makes observation of dogs in the upper tiers (by both kennel owners and warden) difficult.
- ④ The requirement for twenty minutes of exercise each day for every dog is one of the most important changes, and needs to be written into the new regs. and then enforced. If it means the kennel owner has to hire more help to meet this requirement, so be it.
- ⑤ Temperature. The dogs in Penna. kennels need protection from cold (and excessively hot) temperatures. Both the ASPCA and the DLAB comments suggest reasonable levels for year-round management of these kennels.

We have heard and used many comments suggesting that the proposed regulations would pose a financial hardship and management problems for many kennel owners. As a person who was permitted by the PA. Dept. of Agriculture for 25 years to sell raw goat milk and manufacture and sell cheese I was not granted an exception to the regulations because I was hand-milking eight goats, and making very little money.

Indeed, I spent thousands of dollars to comply. I was not offered a choice. It is simply the cost of doing business in this commonwealth. Or should I say, doing business legally. I would like to see the same kind of standards applied in the dog industry. (In our DLAB comments, we have taken into consideration the comments of hobby-breeders and other special interest groups.)

Once again we face a situation where human greed exacts a heavy toll on the animals in our care. Obviously new regulations are direly needed, and enforcement is equally important. Hopefully, through various kinds of education, the public will

become more aware of the plight of the dogs in these kennels, and will stop supporting the industry by choosing dogs from shelters or reputable breeders instead of pet shops and puppy mills. A multi-faceted approach to the problem is our best hope of success.

I am grateful that the Governor has turned his attention to this issue, and, as a member of the new DLAB, to be able to be actively involved in the process.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. It is a heartfelt and sincere plea on behalf of the dogs, and the people who care about them.

Yours truly,

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