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To:  
Mary Bender  
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From:  
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
COMMISSION  
PENNSYLVANIA

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Re: Proposed Changes to PA's kennel regulations

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on a topic very dear to me - improving and safeguarding the lives of kennel-held dogs. I just returned from spending the winter in S. Texas, a third-world area of the U.S. where abuse and neglect of all domestically held animals is both tolerated and accepted. It is heart breaking.

While there, I recall a newspaper reference to someone's objection to a change in PA's regulations concerning the size of the cage such that the dog should be able to sleep/rest flat out with legs extended. The objector suggested that whoever proposed such a change did not know that dogs usually sleep curled up. I started watching my lab mix more carefully after that and can state that he rests flat out at least 75% of the time. He curls up most commonly when he is cold. Just as we humans need living "space," so do all mammals; and when we sleep, we all change positions frequently to stay comfortable and not get stiff. Some objectors to larger kennels have said it is too costly to breeders. If the breeders can not bear the cost, then they have no business being in the business.

Over the years, many new regulations concerning the health and welfare of farm animals have been instituted to safeguard both animals and consumers. I imagine that the "cost objection" was raised very frequently, but cost should not be a consideration when dealing health and welfare. One should either foot the bill or get out of the business.

I also hope that the area of enforcement of dog laws gets some improvement. The dog law officers should have more power to follow through on their inspections.

My dog had a very sad start to his life, at the notorious Puppy Love Kennel and then delivered to the Humane League by his first two owners. When he came to me at 1 1/2 it was obvious that he had issues (and still has some) as a result of poor breeding and socializing in the first months of his life. I suspect that the first two owners simply couldn't deal with the issues. I have been successful and have accepted him with his shortcomings. To those who suggest changes to kennel regulations are the result of emotional issues, I say: So be it. All creatures, great and small deserve our respect and support. They are not just inanimate, throw-away plastic toys.

Feel free to use my comments in any way that will help dog welfare.

Sincerely,

*Nancy Blechschmidt*  
Nancy Blechschmidt

*March 13, 2007*