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**From:** Loreta2300@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2007 9:32 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Puppy Mills in Pennsylvania

Many Americans still buy their dogs from pet stores. And most pet stores get the dogs from puppy mills – factory farms where thousands upon thousands of mother dogs spend their entire lives in small wire cages giving birth after birth after birth to puppies of every breed.

These puppy mills are **places of horror** – almost entirely unregulated. And the puppies themselves are often sickly and suffering from genetic deformities that only show up when it's too late to take them back to the store. Where do they end up? In our shelters and our broken hearts.

One of the worst states for puppy mills is Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is known to have thousands of facilities that breed dogs, and many have been shown to have substandard conditions. With that in mind, there is plenty of excitement in Pennsylvania about the new proposed legislation to regulate puppy mills.

Former Senator Rick Santorum (R) introduced legislation to combat the worst abuses, and last fall, Governor Ed Rendell (D) appointed Jessie L. Smith as the state of Pennsylvania's first special deputy secretary of dog law enforcement.

However I am concerned that the current proposed regulations would harm the efforts of the rescue groups and organizations who foster and help to save many of these very dogs.

Best Friends, of which I am a supporting member, supports Gov. Rendell for his commitment, but there are some major problems with the new regulations, and **we hope the governor will work with Best Friends and local non-profit rescue and foster groups** to address these problems.

1. The Dog Law regulations as applied to kennels should exempt all non-profit animal welfare and rescue organizations, especially non-kennel-based rescues and fosters. These life-saving groups are organized specifically to save and care for the dogs who are given up by their new families because of sickness and genetic disorders caused by bad breeding practices.
2. Representatives from non-profit animal welfare and rescue groups should be included on the Dog Law Advisory Board to better represent the interests of animals in forming these regulations.