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Dogs are companion animals not livestock and need their own protective laws.

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
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Dogs today serve the human race in so many diverse ways, (i.e. companion animals to families, service dogs to the handicapped, therapy dogs, provide emotional support through a divorce, and provide support in rebuilding ones life (*The New Work of Dogs, John Katz,*) to name just a few. Yet so many dogs are psychologically abused daily across the country by forcing them to live in puppy mills in a cage 24/7/365.

Dogs in their natural habitat require a "pack leader". If a dog lives in a household, then the humans are the "pack leaders". If living in their natural habitat, one male and one female dog are the "pack leaders". (*Cesar's Way, Cesar Millan, April, 2006; and The Seven Ages of Man's Best Friend, Jan Fennell, 2005*).

All puppies are born with the prey instinct (*Animals in Translation, Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson*) and it is the mother dog that teaches her pups what is prey. Is it a varmint, a child? The first ten days, the puppies are completely dependent on their mother. The first turning point changes approximately from ten days onward. Their eyes begin to open; their hearing becomes prevalent and no longer do they depend solely on smell. It is at this point where puppy millers fail miserably in providing emotionally stable and physically well-developed puppies for retail. Starting at three weeks, if puppies were in their natural environment, the mother dog teaches her puppies' social skills, and behavior boundaries. This is where humans must assist the mother dog by handling the puppies to teach them socialization and especially how to interact with children. This is vitally important for the continued development of the puppy to be handled by humans. If puppies are deprived of interactions with humans in their environment by the age of 14 weeks, it will be problematic for them the rest of their life's. Puppy mills simply don't provide this assistance.

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Puppies are taken from their mother from approximately six weeks old, often times even younger, and transported to pet shops where they continue to live in a cage until sold. In pet shops they again continue to live with minimal exposure to human contact and deprived of learning proper social skills especially towards children, and receive minimal exercise for their physical development. Emotionally these puppies are not stable evidenced by the fact that one and a half million of them are euthanized every year because of behavior problems. (*Animals in Translation, Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson*).

As for the mother left back at the puppy mills, she continues to live in a cage 24/7/365 and at her next heat is again bred. What happens to these mother dogs emotionally and physically that do not receive daily exercise, proper medical care, and poor diet? Some unfortunately never escape and die in the mill, are shot because she is no longer valuable or the lucky ones are rescued. I have one such rescued dog, a Scottish Terrier that I have been rehabilitating for four years next month and will continue rehabilitating her for

months to come. She is one of the lucky ones that made it out of a puppy mill and is living a quality of life dogs as meant to live, going on daily walks with other dogs and a human pack leader, receiving proper medical care and proper diet. Dogs are not livestock. They are companion animals. Sheep, cows, pigs, and chickens are livestock and are a food source. How many homes have any of these "livestock" living in their homes, sleeping in their beds, riding in their cars, and laying on the couch beside them? There is a reason why we call them "man's best friend." It is time we repaid our debt by passing laws to protect them.

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Message:

My recent paper on puppy mills:

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