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*Delaware Valley Yorkshire Terrier Club, Inc.*

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
TERMINAL COMMISSION

7901 Henry Avenue, Apt. C-107  
Philadelphia, PA 19128

January 26, 2007

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

Dear Ms. Bender,

I, Diane Weil am writing this letter on behalf of the Delaware Valley Yorkshire Terrier Club, Inc., incorporated in 1969. I reside at 7901 Henry Avenue, Apt., C-107, Philadelphia, PA 19128.

The Delaware Valley Yorkshire Terrier Club is a breed specialty club. Our members must be sponsored to obtain membership into the club. There is a rigid code of ethics our members follow. One of our goals is to educate not only our membership about recent studies/findings in the area of science, genetics, and health issues, but to educate the public as well. Oftentimes, you will find representatives of our club at public venues manning a "public education" table. Our members adhere to the principal that any pets being sold must be spayed or neutered. All pups are vet checked prior to going to their new homes. Contractually, the new owner must also take the dog to a vet of his or her own choice. We encourage our members to also include the phrase "first right of return" in their contracts. We welcome any dogs back into our home at any time during their lives should the owner be unable to care for the dog. This is more than comforting to the new pet owner. Our breed club on a national level has donated funds to various study groups, researching health issues and genetic markers. Our club supports these donations and outreach programs.

I am writing to comment on the proposed amendments to the Pennsylvania dog law regulations issued on December 16, 2006. I believe that inhumane and substandard kennel conditions should not be tolerated, but I do not agree that most of the proposed regulatory changes are needed, or would necessarily have a beneficial outcome if adopted. Many are impractical, excessively burdensome and costly, unenforceable, and /or will not improve the quality of life for the dogs these kennels.

We are concerned about the proposed kennel restrictions. Licensed breeders will not be able to raise puppies in their homes. What could possibly be better for newborns than to be raised under the watchful eye of the breeder throughout the day and night? Not only must the puppies be watched closely, but the nursing mothers must be watched as well. Forcing bitches and their whelps to remain in a separate facility will surely increase the number of sick or dead pups and mothers. Also, puppies must be socialized from their earliest days. Pups used to the warm and caring touch of a human being will certainly reflect this behavior as young, teenage and adult dogs.

To say that the new laws will not show a cost increase to the government concerns us as citizens of the Commonwealth. Should a new group of supervisors under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture be involved with this new regulatory board, what criteria would enable the governor to only have "animal lovers" function in this capacity? Surely, one not involved with animals previously, or one not having empathy and sensitivity to the animals we so love, could prove to be quite damaging.

There are many issues involved with these newly proposed amendments, too many for any of us to address in a letter. Please know that the breeders our club represents, as well as the many pet owners, are caring, intelligent and ethical people. Our dogs are members of our families, dogs whom our lives revolve around. Please take the time to meet some of the the responsible breeders and know why these proposed amendments are not only unacceptable to us, but in reality will not stop the puppy mills or large corporations whose only motive for breeding is a monetary one.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter. It is with heavy heart that I write these words.

Sincerely,

Diane Weil  
Corresponding Secretary,  
Delaware Valley Yorkshire Terrier Club.