

From: Smith, James M.
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2010 1:19 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: FW: [MAESSRFOSTER] Dog Laws

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#2785

From: jsklunk@comcast.net [mailto:jsklunk@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2010 12:26 PM
To: gtuma@state.pa.us; stcrawford@state.pa.us; rredding@state.pa.us; dduer@state.pa.us; jsmith@state.pa.us; suewest@state.pa.us; dkennedy@state.pa.us; skniley@state.pa.us; nwyatt@state.pa.us; ashriver@state.pa.us; sbattisti@state.pa.us; scampbell@state.pa.us; lsimmens@state.pa.us; ckopp@state.pa.us; Smith, James M.
Subject: Fwd: [MAESSRFOSTER] Dog Laws

To the leaders of my home state, Pennsylvania:

I received the information below and am completely OUTRAGED with this new "proposal". What is happening with the Pennsylvania leadership that we can even THINK that these new "UPDATES" will be in the best interest of the dogs? Do I need to bring my dog that was pulled by the PSPCA from the Emmaus "Kennel" and show you the DAMAGE that what you're proposing to put back in place has done to this innocent animal? Care to guess what we named this particular dog??? "JT".... short for "Justin Time".... yes, his life was saved JUST in TIME... from these barbaric environments that you are all proposing to put back in place. And to think that JT is just one of so very many that you've all impacted.

This is completely OUTRAGEOUS... and to think that I voted to put some of you in office. Stop this NOW.

Regards and completely disgusted with our "leaders" in Pennsylvania,
Jean Klunk

From Main Line Animal Rescue:

Why is the Rendell Administration supporting the illegal actions of PA's Department of Agriculture?

Our new dog law clearly states adult dogs in commercial kennels can no longer be housed on painful wire flooring (solid or slatted only) and every adult dog is required to have unfettered access to an outside exercise run. After four years of promises and after boasting "the toughest dog laws in the country," Governor Rendell and his staff are now refusing to enforce the very law Governor Rendell signed in 2008. Making matters worse, they are attempting to push through regulations which would allow commercial breeders to use 50% wire floors in their dogs' cages.

Breeding dogs will once again be forced to stand on painful wire - wire that entraps their legs and causes their feet to become ulcerated and splayed.

(see video at the end of this email - mill dog housed on wire unable to walk properly)

If this isn't bad enough, Rendell's Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding recently decided to support Pennsylvania's puppy mill industry by officially adopting a policy whereby pregnant and nursing mothers are deprived of access to outdoor exercise runs for eight months of every year. Under our new dog law (Act 119), every adult dog in a commercial breeding kennel is now guaranteed unfettered access to an outdoor exercise run, but Secretary Redding is telling breeders that if they carry their dogs to an exercise area, they will satisfy the law. Does Secretary Redding honestly believe that commercial breeders keeping over 500 breeding dogs will be able to carry each and every dog outside twice a day? It is physically impossible. And how will state inspectors prove these animals have been exercised? They can't.

Animal lovers throughout Pennsylvania should be outraged by what Governor Rendell, Secretary Redding, Rendell's Chief of Staff Steve Crawford, Special Secretary Jessie Smith, and Director of Dog Law Sue West are trying to do. By attempting to circumvent our new laws, they are condemning millions of dogs to lives of untold suffering. We worked hard for these new laws. We can't let them be taken away from us without a fight. The dogs are counting on us. We need to write Governor Rendell and his staff and tell them enough is enough - they need to enforce our new laws as written. PLEASE COPY AND PASTE THE EMAIL ADDRESSES AT THE END OF THIS EMAIL. We have included IRRRC's email address so your email can be an official comment.

Please ask your friends and family to write as well. Contact your state representatives and state senator. Don't give money to any organization that is not actively fighting to get dogs off wire flooring in Pennsylvania's commercial kennels. If you are contacted and asked to donate your hard earned money and they tell you 50% wire is best - tell them to tell their story walking. They're trying to deprive PA's dogs of what they were promised under Act 119. If anyone contacts you and asks you to support the Canine Health Regulations, don't do it - not until the section allowing dogs to stand on wire flooring is removed and not before Secretary Russell Redding withdraws his policy depriving adult dogs in commercial kennels access to outside exercise runs.

After you write, Secretary Jessie Smith and Director Sue West will offer excuses:

- 1) Secretary Smith will tell you the Department of Agriculture will deny breeding dogs unfettered access to outside exercise runs because puppies can get stuck outside. Has Secretary Smith never seen a mother dog carry a puppy in her mouth? And why can't the breeders (who are making a fortune from breeding these animals) check their dogs periodically to see if any of their puppies are stuck outside? Many believe Smith and West are willing to confine mothers to small cages in hot barns rather than insist their friends, the commercial breeders, comply with our

new laws and make the necessary structural improvements to their kennels (adding outside runs).

2) Secretary Smith will tell you the Department is allowing commercial breeders to house their adult dogs on wire so they can be with their nursing puppies. While it is optional to house puppies up to twelve weeks of age on wire flooring, it is illegal to house their mothers on anything but solid or slatted. If the breeders want to keep the mothers and puppies together, they should place the puppies on solid flooring with their mothers.

3) Secretary Smith will tell you it is more sanitary to keep the mother and puppies on wire - it is also more sanitary if the breeders clean every day. Hutches with wire flooring allows the breeders to avoid cleaning their kennels every day, which is required by law. Tell Secretary Smith and Director of Dog Law Sue West to stop coming up with new ways to protect the breeders and do what they were hired to do - protect the dogs of PA. It is more sanitary if the mother dog can eliminate outside and not be forced to eliminate near her puppies inside.

4) Secretary Smith will tell you that whelping boxes will now be required for pregnant dogs and nursing mothers - and the whelping boxes will have solid flooring. What the Department is doing is allowing breeders to use 50% wire flooring and they want us to believe that whelping boxes will satisfy the solid flooring requirement of Act 119. The Department of Agriculture is deliberately trying to mislead the public. They're giving us half of something we already have. Under our new dog laws (Act 119), solid floors are **REQUIRED** for the **ENTIRE** surface of the floor in the dogs' cages.

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Puppy mill dog unable to walk after living on painful wire flooring -
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GY0OV-QBWo> (Thanks to DVGRR
for the video clip)

FAQs

Secretary Jessie Smith is replying to your emails and telling you what we allege is not true. Well, here are the facts. The Department of Agriculture is deliberately trying to mislead the citizens of Pennsylvania. In Secretary Smith's own report to the General Assembly, she lists getting breeding dogs off wire as one of Governor Rendell's major accomplishments. Why then is she now telling the breeders that they can still use chicken wire for half the flooring in these poor dogs' cages? If you received a reply from Secretary Smith, email her back the facts and tell her **NO WIRE FLOORING MEANS NO WIRE FLOORING**. The Department boasts the strongest dog laws in the country? - too bad, they're not being enforced. Of the remaining 111 commercial kennels in Pennsylvania, Secretary Smith and Director of the Bureau of Dog Law Sue West handed out waivers to 81 of those kennels - exempting them from PA's tough new dog laws, in some cases up to three years!

FACT SHEET

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NON-ENFORCEMENT OF THE NEW DOG LAW - PA ACT 119 of 2008

How is the Department subverting the new Dog Law?

The new Dog Law requires adult dogs confined in cages at commercial breeding kennels to have access to an outside run. The new Dog Law also prohibits adult dogs to be housed on wire floors which are painful and harmful to the dogs. Unfortunately, the Department has carved out exceptions to these sections of the Dog Law.

What specific provision of the law is being disregarded by the Department?

3 P.S. 459-207 (i) (4) which states that all dogs over 12 weeks of age in a commercial kennel, "shall have an entry way that will allow the dog unfettered clearance out of the enclosure to an exercise area."

3 P. S. 459-207 (i) (6) reaffirms the above provision and states that the "exercise area must allow for unfettered clearance for dogs from their primary enclosures."

What action has the Department taken to undermine the requirement that adult dogs have access to an exercise run?

Secretary of Agriculture, Russell Redding, issued a "Statement of Policy" on July 16, 2010 stating that the "Bureau [of Dog Law] will consider a kennel owner to be compliant [with the law] if the nursing mother is provided daily access to an exercise area."

Isn't it sufficient that there is an exercise area even if it is not attached to the primary enclosure housing the dog?

No, as there is no way of enforcing such a provision and ensuring that the dogs are actually given an opportunity to leave their cages. The wardens have no way

of determining if the dogs were removed from their cages and placed in a separate exercise area at any point in time during the day. The legislature specifically required that the dogs must have “unfettered access to an exercise area” in order to ensure compliance. The legislature recognized the need for dogs to have access to an exercise run as breeding dogs in commercial kennels spend their entire lives confined in a cage.

Is there any other problem associated with mother dogs not being afforded access to an exercise run?

Yes, such a policy contributes to unsanitary conditions and creates a health risk to puppies during a time when their immune systems are not fully developed. An exercise run, as required by law, would allow a mother dog to relieve herself away from her puppies. Under the policy adopted by the Department, the mother dog is now forced to relieve and eliminate inside the cage with her puppies.

What other specific provision of this law is being thwarted by the Department?

3 P.S. 459-207 (i) (3) (i) which states that flooring of primary enclosures housing dogs over 12 weeks of age in commercial kennels, “shall not be metal strand.”

What action has the Department taken to undermine the prohibition on metal strand and wire flooring?

On Wednesday, July 14, 2010, the Department withdrew the proposed regulations of the Canine Health Board and added a provision 28a.8.(e) allowing 50% of the flooring of cages housing mother dogs to be exempt from the ban on wire flooring. The Department then resubmitted such regulations to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission. The Department did so without the consent and approval of the Canine Health Board and without even advising them of such action. It should be emphasized that the Department has no authority to draft and submit proposed regulations on behalf of the Canine Health Board.

What consequences will this have on breeding dogs in commercial kennels?

Dogs will be forced to walk on wire flooring which is not only uncomfortable but actually painful and causes injuries such as splayed feet, cysts on paws, and painful abrasions. The time spent on this wire flooring is only exacerbated due to the Department’s decision to allow these dogs to be confined all day in their cage and not allowed a time out by access to an exercise run as required by law.

What possible reason could the Department give for permitting dogs to be housed on wire flooring?

The Department alleges that the wire flooring will keep the puppies cleaner as the wire floor will allow some of the waste to fall outside the cage. The Bureau has admitted that the majority of commercial breeders maintain their dogs in unsanitary conditions. Instead of enforcing the requirement for daily cleaning of cages, the Bureau has taken the approach of simply permitting the breeders to ignore the sanitation regulations and allow wire flooring in the hope that the

waste falls through the cage floor. However, the puppies are not the cause of the sanitation problem since the mother dog, as per her nature, cleans up after her puppies, as dams have done for hundreds of years when they lived in dens and did not want the smell attracting predators. The Department has actually exacerbated the sanitation problem by denying the mother dog access to an outside run to relieve herself. Instead, the mother dog has no choice but to urinate and defecate in the same cage with her puppies.

What possible reason could the Department give for permitting dogs to be confined in a cage without access to a run?

The Department believes that the puppies might get trapped in the outside run and not be able to crawl back into the cage with the mother dog. However, there is simply no evidence of puppies being trapped in outside runs other than those with wire floors which are now banned in commercial kennels. The Department has no experience of this problem on which to base such a claim. If in fact, this was an occurring problem, why doesn't the Department simply require the run to be *indoors* rather than allowing the breeders to deny any run or opportunity for exercise for the dogs?

Since this will only impact mother dogs with nursing puppies is it really that big of deal?

The Director of the Bureau of Dog Law admitted that they will allow the breeders to keep mother dogs on wire floors and without access to a run for at least two weeks *prior* to actually having puppies. Outside of performing ultrasounds on the expectant dog, the wardens will have no way of determining when the dog is two weeks away from birthing and this two weeks exemption will actually result in a one month exemption in order to hold up in district court. While many puppies are weaned and taken away from the mother after 6 – 8 weeks, many commercial breeders leave unsold puppies with the dam for up to 12 weeks. While the Department alleges that such exemption only applies to mother dogs with *nursing* puppies, the actual regulation drafted by the Department states that it applies to dams with puppies as old as 12 weeks of age regardless if they are nursing or not. Thus, one month prior to birthing plus 12 weeks with puppies and bred twice a year, adult dogs in commercial kennels will be living in tiny wire floor cages with no attached runs for 8 months of every year.

Is this a result of a gray area of the law? Isn't the Department just attempting to work out a compromise of conflicting sections of the new Dog Law?

The Department claims that this is a gray area of law as the prohibition on wire flooring and the requirement for access to an outdoor run is only required for dogs over 12 weeks of age. The Department claims that the law doesn't address what the requirements would be for an adult mother dog being housed with puppies less than 12 weeks of age. The Department maintains that since puppies are not covered by this provision of the law, then any adult dam housed with puppies should also be afforded an exemption from the law. However, this is a "shall" versus "may" issue. The law is clear that dogs over 12 weeks of age *shall* have access to a run and not be housed on wire floor whereas the puppies *may* be housed on wire floor without runs. The intent of the legislature was clear that this law was meant to address the mother dogs that are confined in

these breeding kennels for their whole life. The entire focus during the legislative process was to protect the adult dogs as the puppies escape such rigorous confinement by 8 – 12 weeks of age. The intent was to exempt “weaned” puppies that were housed separate from the mother dogs. In fact, 3 P.S. 459-207 (i) defines all requirements for “dogs over 12 weeks of age” and specifically refers to nursing bitches and their puppies in subsection (6) (viii) requiring that they be separate from other dogs. If the legislature intended for mother dogs with nursing puppies to be exempt from the requirements of dogs over 12 weeks of age, why would the law specifically mention them [“nursing bitches and the puppies”] in 207 (i) which lists the specific requirements for dogs over 12 weeks of age?

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