



Kennel licensing bills punish responsible breeders because we exist

*An analysis presented by Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc.
and the Clermont County Kennel Club.*



Two kennel licensing bills were reintroduced in the Ohio Legislature in May. Promoted as anti-puppy mill bills, these proposals target responsible breeders, not substandard operations, and give a huge victory to animal rights activists.

Identified as HB 223* and SB 173, these bills played into the anti-breeding agenda because they ...

1. ... imply that all kennels with more than eight intact dogs are puppy mills. Anti-breeding activists depend on our abhorrence of “puppy mills” to generate support for such bills, so they deliberately blur the distinction between clean, well-run kennels and dirty, substandard operations when lobbying lawmakers to shut down puppy mills.

2. ... place a high financial burden on kennel owners prior to any complaint or investigation of suspected violations of cruelty law or standards of care. The mandated bonds, criminal background checks, and high annual license fees were guaranteed to drive good breeders away or encourage them to violate the law in hopes they wouldn't get caught.

3. ... imply that kennel owners are potential criminals incapable of properly housing and caring for dogs. The bills require criminal background checks, including fingerprinting, for kennel license applicants.

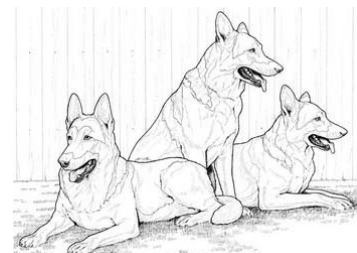
4. ... micro-manage veterinary care, superceding a breeder's right to determine medical plans for his dogs.

5. ... require breeders to prove that they are not keeping intact dogs primarily for breeding. Obviously, many breeders keep more than eight intact dogs but only breed a litter or two each year. However, unless they could prove that the intact dogs were not used for breeding, they would be required to have a license.

6. ... regulate the size of crates that can be used for temporary confinement. The bills exempted travel crates but fail to note that the same crates can be used for temporary confinement in hotel rooms, homes, dog show grooming areas, etc. without adverse effect on dogs that also get adequate exercise, playtime, and socialization.

7. ... interfere with unfettered citizen access to the courts by requiring owners to post a non-returnable bond for care of impounded dogs in order to appeal that impoundment. Current cruelty law places the burden on the local agency to apply for a deposit for animal care, gives the court the opportunity to deny the agency's application, and includes a provision for returning the money if the owner is exonerated of the charges or if the animals were impounded in error.

Don't be fooled: HSUS and other anti-breeding groups use emotionally-laden terms such as “puppy mill” to generate support for their agenda to end the breeding of purebred dogs. To achieve victory, they need laws that burden responsible breeders and kennel owners with an elaborate licensing scheme, high costs, and government fiat about veterinary care and housing that punish responsible breeders and kennel owners for simply pursuing their passion or livelihood.



Ohio Valley Dog Owners monitors the legislature for progress on anti-breeding bills. You can reach us at 6241 N. State Route 48, Lebanon, OH 45036; (513) 932-3176; ovdogo@canismajor.com. Our website is www.canismajor.com/orgs/ovdo.

* Read these bills at http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127_HB_223 and http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127_SB_173.