

Cat Fanciers' Association -- Pet Lover Alert

The Minnesota "Dog and Cat Breeders Act" House Bill HF2469/Senate Bill SF2292

Should your next pet cat or dog be home-raised by a local hobby breeder, or would you rather buy a pet raised in a cage by a commercial breeder hundreds if not thousands of miles away?

Commercial pet breeders are currently regulated and inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This includes transportation, handling, housing, treatment and care of certain animals, and the licensing of persons who deal in dogs and cats sold as pets for commerce and profit. Federal regulations exclude small, home-based hobby breeders who raise pets in their own homes and do not sell wholesale or for research. This allows you to select your pet locally from small, hobby breeders who sell directly to the ultimate pet owner.

The "Dog and Cat Breeders Act" would create a new Minnesota bureaucracy to duplicate the USDA inspection process for commercial breeders. In addition, it would expand the licensing requirements to include many small hobby breeders who raise pets in their homes.

The bill (Senate Bill SF2292) has been referred to the Senate Agriculture Veterans Committee for hearing on Tuesday, February 26 @ 3:00 p.m. We need opposition calls and e-mails to the Chair and Committee members immediately. Contact information follows. Some points you may wish to raise:

The claimed goal of advocates is to regulate large commercial breeding facilities - FACTS:

- There are **no** large commercial facilities breeding cats in this state!
- This bill is redundant. Commercial breeders are already USDA inspected and licensed.
- This bill is a costly, unfunded mandate which will divert limited resources devoted to animal welfare.
- Breeder licensing is expensive to administer and difficult to enforce. Jurisdictions that have imposed breeder permits have found them to be costly and unenforceable.

Pet Owners will lose out - FACTS.

- Home-based hobby breeders, used to treating pets as part of the family, will be unable to comply with the commercial licensing requirements.
- Often home-based hobby breeders work elsewhere during the day. Completing the mandatory unannounced inspections would require many "call-backs". This program will be costly to enforce.
- Home-based hobby breeders unable to comply with commercial licensing standards or unwilling to cage and isolate their pets will no longer raise pets.
- When all breeders are treated like commercial businesses then this will be all that is left in the State.
- Pet owners will have to turn to the Internet and out-of-state sources for a pet - no opportunity to have mentoring help from a local breeder.
- Large, out-of-state, commercial breeders and wholesalers will be the only source of cats and dogs in your future.

Contact your representatives on the Senate Agriculture Veterans Affairs Committee to let them know you oppose the "Dog and Cat Breeders Act" as it is written. Each e-mail should be individually addressed to the respective committee member or the chair. NOTE: if there is no e-mail address listed use their online mail forms at: http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members/member_list.php

The meeting will be on Tuesday, February 26, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. so you must act NOW.

Chair: **Jim Vickerman**
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Room 226
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.5968

David W. Hann
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 127
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.296.1749

Tony Lourey
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 205
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.0293
sen.tony.lourey@senate.mn

Vice Chair: **Sharon L. Erickson Ropes**
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room G-24
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.5649
sen.sharon.erickson.ropes@senate.mn

Bill G. Ingebrigtsen
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 123
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.297.8063
sen.bill.ingebrigtsen@senate.mn

Steve Murphy
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 325
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.4264

Ranking Minority Member:
Steve Dille
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 103
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.296.4131
sen.steve.dille@senate.mn

Paul E. Koering
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 131
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.296.4875
sen.paul.koering@senate.mn

Rod Skoe
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 303
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.4196
sen.rod.skoe@senate.mn

Satveer S. Chaudhary
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 205
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.4334
sen.satveer.chaudhary@senate.mn

Gary W. Kubly
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 301
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.5094
sen.gary.kubly@senate.mn

Dan Skogen
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 303
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.5655
sen.dan.skogen@senate.mn

Joe Gimse
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 105
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.296.3826
sen.joe.gimse@senate.mn

Keith Langseth
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 122
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651.296.3205

Betsy L. Wergin
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 145
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206
651.296.8075
sen.betsy.wergin@senate.mn

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