

we also support reasonable and enforceable laws that protect the welfare and health of dogs without restricting the rights of owners or breeders who take their responsibilities seriously.

Senate Bill 1340

Known as the "Kennel Definitions Act", SB 1340 seeks to:

* Define "commercial breeder" as a person, other than a hobby or show breeder engaged in the business of breeding animals for sale or for exchange in return for monetary consideration, and who harbors more than 25 intact females for the primary purpose of breeding animals for sale either through the internet or via brokers or directly to the public or directly to pet stores. Commercial breeders must be USDA certified and following the guidelines of the federal Animal Welfare Act, and shall meet or exceed all requirements of animal care and welfare specified in Sb 1340.

* Define "hobby breeder" as a noncommercial breeder who harbors less than 25 intact females for the primary purpose of breeding animals for sale either through the internet or directly to the public. Hobby breeders are required to meet or exceed all requirements of animal care and welfare specified in SB 1340.

* Define "hobby show breeder" as a noncommercial breeder who breeds animals with the primary purpose of exhibiting or show the animals at state or municipal or county or registry club-sanction events or shows, improving the breed, or selling the animals for the specific goals of exhibition or exhibiting, and having no more than 10 intact females. Hobby show breeders are required to meet or exceed all requirements

of animal care and welfare specified in SB 1340.

* Provide that while hobby or show breeders are exempt from inspection requirements, they must register annually, at no cost, with the Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture for the purpose of establishing that they are hobby or show breeders.

* Require commercial, hobby, and hobby show breeders to adhere to significant, costly building requirements for indoor housing facilities.

* Impose vague consumer protection provisions for puppy buyers.

* Designate violators as a "puppy mill" without doing anything for the tangible benefit of dogs kept in substandard facilities.

Senate Bill 1712

SB 1712 will create the Board of Commercial Pet Breeders to enforce and administer the provisions of the Act; and will adopt rules establishing license fees, procedures and requirements for license application and renewal, conditions under which licenses are revoked or denied, and qualifications for registered breeder inspectors. The Board will also be required to establish minimum standards for proper veterinary care, treatment, feeding and watering, shelter and confinement, grooming, exercise, socialization, transportation, disposition of dogs, and other standards it deems necessary to protect the public health and the health and welfare of animals. Additionally, the Board will maintain a public directory of licensed commercial pet breeders.

Should SB 1712 be enacted as currently written, those with 11

or more intact female dogs will be required to be licensed. Licensees will be subject to:

* Pre-licensure inspection of facilities, the undetermined cost of which must be paid by the license applicant.

* At least one inspection annually, during normal business hours but without advanced notice, of each facility kept by the licensee.

* Inspections based on written complaints received by the Board.

* License display requirements at the licensed facility.

* License number disclosure requirements on advertisements, sales contracts, and transfer agreements.

* Annual reporting requirements.

* Record-keeping requirements for each dog maintained in a licensee's facility.

Under the bill, the Board is required to adopt all rules by November 1, 2010, and licensees are required to come into compliance by January 1, 2011. Licensees who violate the act may have their license revoked, and be subject to a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500 and/or a year in jail. Those who interfere with an inspector would be subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or two years in jail.

Both SB 1340 and SB 1712 will undoubtedly prove costly to enforce at a time when Oklahoma is expected to experience a \$1.2 billion shortfall for the upcoming fiscal year budget that begins on July 1.