

... the reasonable voice regarding animal issues

**The Honorable Greg Abbott**  
Austin, Texas

**March 2, 2015**

**RE: "HSUS California-izing Texas"**

**Via Rep. Senfronia Thompson, D-Houston**

**Sponsor of HB 1451 (2011 Session)**

**Written to "eliminate" pet breeders, not regulate them!**

**Doesn't even contain the "commercial" word!**



**HSUS is writing our Texas animal laws! Can you help us? HB 1451, the Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS) misnamed "Puppy Mill" Bill, is a radical national "animal rights" legislative agenda to end all use, breeding, sales, and ownership of animals for any reason, including pet ownership.** The "first step" to attacking other Texas animal interests. It's not a "breeder" issue; it's a pet issue. Our pets have never meant more to us than in these stressful times.

**One woman, Rep. Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston), controls both the House and Senate every session by threatening all legislators that if they don't do as she commands regarding legislation, they'll never get their bills through the Local & Consent Calendar Committee (which she chairs) for a Floor Vote!** That is how she got her bill passed in 2011 and how she continues to block our efforts today to amend HB 1451. Rep. Thompson told our lobbyist, former Speaker Gib Lewis, that she didn't like what she was hearing. So we prepared a three page letter which Gib hand delivered, and her response was that she is opposed to the changes set forth below; the bill would stand as passed; and NO changes would be accepted!

**With the bill filing deadline March 13th, we only ask for these two amendments:**

- **Transfer Administration to Texas Department of Agriculture; has animal expertise.**
- **Abolish the Breeder Advisory Committee, which will always be stacked by extremists.**
- **Our bill must be assigned to the Agriculture Committees in House and Senate or it would never get out of committee.**

**Oklahoma:** In 2012 Rep. Phil Richardson, a veterinarian and chairman of House Agriculture Committee, authored a bill to "Repeal and Replace" their existing state Commercial Pet Breeders Law (passed previous year). Richardson's bill passed; transferred the administration of the program to the Oklahoma Agriculture Department and eliminated the "Oklahoma Board of Commercial Pet Breeders." Rep. Richardson said the pet breeders' board had become too confrontational with pet breeders and that the Oklahoma Agriculture Department was better able to deal with the situation.

**Dr. Lori Teller, DVM, says it best:** "I am resigning my position on the [Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation] Breeder Advisory Committee [representing veterinarians] ... I have become disillusioned with the process. Unfortunately I do not feel we are going down the right road to improve animal welfare ... I think we are driving the good breeders out of business ... the breeders who do seriously care about the animals they raise and improving the breeds they are passionate about will either be out of business or, at the least, out of state."

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING & REGULATION (TDLR)  
BREEDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC) IS CORRUPTED:**

**HB 1451 was written to ensure that TDLR would oversee regulations**, knowing that TDLR Assistant General Counsel Della Wood Lindquist (Volunteer with Emancipet, an Austin animal “rights” group) would be there to keep the rules so strict that breeders would be forced out of business. Susan Stanford, TDLR spokesman, said “leaders are aware of Lindquist’s involvement in animal ‘rights’ causes. Though she is working on the puppy mill legislation and would be involved in implementation,” Stanford said, “Lindquist would not have carte blanche to write these rules. She’s working as a team member.”

*Natalie Lynch, an Austin attorney, was recently appointed to represent Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) as an animal “welfare” organization on the BAC!*  
*THLN is an animal “rights” organization; not “welfare” and has no programs.  
THLN is the Texas arm of Humane Society of the U.S!*

**To date there are only 170 Licensed Breeders and 15 of those are dual USDA licensed.** Enforcement began September 1, 2012 and the program is required by statute to cover all administration and enforcement costs with fees and fines. The Legislative Budget Board’s Fiscal Note to the Senate Committee said TDLR projected 1,000 Licensed Breeders.

A Few Objectionable Provisions:

- USDA regulations are required by statute as minimum standards of care -- unable to be met in a home setting; originally written for large sterile animal research facilities. Not simply basic care as portrayed.
- \$1,000 “Breeder Bounty”
- “Snitch Slush Fund”
- Allows “Third Party Inspectors,” who could be “animal rights” extremists.

**Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller** visited our booth at the Republican State Convention and seemed receptive to moving the administration of this new law under his department instead of being administered by Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation.

**One of our members talked to you at a fundraiser** regarding this issue and told you she suffered a major health issue due to stress involved with these Texas “extremists” and was forced to give up her hobby of breeding and showing her special breed of dogs. Perhaps you understand since you told her your mother used to show Schipperkes!

**We are not “commercial” breeders as they have their own organization “Professional Pet Breeders of Texas.”** Responsible Pet Owners Alliance originally organized as an American Kennel Club State Federation, but quickly expanded beyond that to including many diverse animal owners. We have 21 chapters statewide and still growing. We’ve administered a statewide Pet Education, Assistance & Rescue Program for 24 years now from our office in San Antonio. Providing a “voice of reason” regarding all animal issues!

We only have two weeks left and Texas pets are counting on you!

God bless,

*Mary Beth Duerler*

Mary Beth Duerler  
Volunteer Executive Director and President