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Chairman Love and members of the Senate Agriculture Committee

Hello:

My name is Sara Meyer. I'm from Menlo, Kansas. That is in the Northwest, close to Colby, 300 miles from Topeka. I want to Thank You for letting me testify today. You could literally say I was raised with the PUPPIES. I was born in June of 1978, and my parents started their Professional Pet Breeding business in August of 1978.

This is what I know. This is what I grew up with. My Mom, Dad, all three of my brothers, along with one of my sisters-in-law, my nieces and nephews, my husband and my kids work within this industry.

My mother, Sharon Munk, helped to bring about the Kansas Pet Animal Act as we know it today. After she and other breeders visited with Governor Hayden, the first Advisory Board was appointed and they were off and running. You didn't hear the negative publicity about our state anymore. The illegal and substandard facilities were addressed.

There are some very serious errors in Senate Bill #57. The Ag Department is running rough, ignoring the advice from the Advisory Board. In the past 22 years, the Animal Health Department has never once ignored the suggestions, or advice, or majority vote of an Advisory Board. This law belongs to "WE THE PEOPLE." WE wrote it.....the "We" being the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board has one representative from each entity that holds a license, plus a private citizen with no link to the industry. Breeders, Shelters, Boarders, Trainers, Pet Shops etc. each have a representative on that board. Our voices are to be heard through the Advisory Board. They are being ignored, or not being heard FULLY.

The Ag Department inherited this program with the ERO #40 which took effect July 1st, 2011, less than 2 years ago. Everyone in that department is new to this. I believe Dr. Faurot was only recently hired in October of 2012. Ag is asking for \$600,000 to run this program. When in the past it has never even approached the \$500,000 mark. Where are the savings that ERO #40 was to bring about? We had a director/attorney hired for the price of one, and was cheaper than hiring a veterinarian.....and now on top of the veterinarians wages, they want us to cough up the money to pay attorney fees.

Why should we be stuck with the higher fees, when this switch-a-roo was not our idea? If we have less to inspect, due to the economy woes that showed up in 2008, we believe we should have less inspectors. If we are to pay these excessive fees, then we (the Advisory Board) need to see the expenses. They can be trimmed.

Items that need to be worked before this Senate Bill #57 moves on are:

page 12, line 7-10 Please reinstate (f). This is a premises inspection program. It is ONE fee for ONE inspection, of ONE premises. Period end of story.

If a breeder has two separate premises then they are paying two fees for the two premises. This is not a business license it is a PREMISES license. One premises is ONE fee for ONE inspection. If they try to tell you it takes more time to inspect two businesses on the same premises, that is not accurate. They are checking the facility and the health of the animals.

There are other changes as well and my Senator, Senator Ralph Ostmeyer has a list of those changes.

Do not let them mess with our Advisory Board. We agree that the rescue networks deserve a spot on the board. We want the Advisory Board appointed by the Governor. We would like each entity to belong to a professional organization and then that organization can present 3 names to the Governor. We want our voiced heard; we don't want these spots to be hand-picked by the Ag Department. We want 'our' representation.

Passing a law is always easier when all entities meet before the legislative session, and discuss their difference and arrive at what is workable for all.

We are sorry to be wasting your time, as that didn't happen fully this year. Only one meeting took place, but Ag moved beyond the majority votes of those in attendance.

I vehemently oppose passing Senate Bill #57 as it stands today. Either make the necessary corrections as we have instructed our Senator and lobbyist, or just scrap the entire thing, and send all back to the drawing board.

Remember, when a new Governor is elected in years to come, a new Secretary of Ag will be appointed, and they will bring in new staff. My Mom and Dad and the entire extended family are not moving on....we are in Menlo, Kansas.....we will continue to be in Menlo, Kansas, and we will be left with the ashes this department could lead us into, when they all move up or on, from their current job.

We live this DAILY.....This is our livelihood. It is just a job to those at the Ag Department. Let our voices be heard.

Thank you.

Are there any questions?

If I can't answer them I can get the answers for you.

Sara Meyer