



Celebrating Animals | Confronting Cruelty

TO: Special Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
FROM: Midge Grinstead, State Director for The Humane Society of the United States
DATE: October 11, 2013
RE: Support for Updating the Kansas Pet Animal Act (KPAA)

Senator Love and Members of the Committee:

I am the state director for The Humane Society of the United States. Prior to that I was the executive director of a licensed humane society in Kansas for more than fourteen years. I served on the Governor's Companion Animal Advisory Board representing shelters, rescues and fosters and worked hand-in-hand with the Kansas Animal Health Dept. with animal seizures.

I travel the state and work with shelters, rescues, animal welfare groups and law enforcement on a variety of animal issues. I have been contacted several times regarding the lack of enforcement by the Dept. of Ag on health, safety, welfare violations under the Pet Animal Act. People have also reported their concerns with the AFIP enforcement policy and the number of cases where serious animal welfare violations were being left unaddressed.

Based on the complaints that I have received, I decided to investigate and requested open records on 26 facilities. What I found was disturbing. I have attached a report detailing my findings based on my research.

It is obvious to anyone who reviews the reports that we have a serious enforcement problem. From 1999 through June 2011, the Kansas Animal Health Dept., now the Animal Facilities Inspection Program (AFIP) with the Dept. of Ag, seized or received on consent 10,451 animals from licensed and unlicensed facilities. This is an average of 804 animals per year. Fifty-one percent of those animals were from unlicensed operations. More than 35% of the animals came from licensed breeding facilities. However, since the Dept. of Ag assumed responsibilities for the AFIP, there have been very few animals taken under the KPAA.

Several breeding facilities that have been cited and failed repeatedly with animal welfare issues are still in business today. Several facilities have had their USDA license revoked and yet still retain their Kansas license. Clearly, our state has a problem with licensed facilities continually having repeated violations and failing their inspections. This is unacceptable.

It is time that the AFIP enforce the law and revoke the license of those facilities that have repeated violations and fail. The only way the puppy mill problem is going to be resolved is to have the legislature update the KPAA with accepted welfare standards and appropriate enforcement tools.