Current Legislation 6/24/2023

PA SENATE BILLS

- **SB67 –** Repeals Sunday Hunting Prohibition. Applies to hunters using dogs. SUPPORT
- **SB82 –** License fee exemptions for service dogs used by fire dept, sheriff, rescue, medical emergency, municipal or state police. Declares dogs as personal property. SUPPORT
- **SB118 –** Expands list of entities that can receive a wine & spirit auction permit for the means of raising funds. Does not include 501c3's not registered w/ the PDE. (PA Dept of Education) (*See also HB86) NEUTRAL
- **SB357 –** Constitutional Carry of a Firearm. Would refer to hunting & sporting groups SUPPORT
- **SB624 –** Lost Dog Hotline and Lost Dog Registry within the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement. The question is funding sources given current shortfalls at the BDLE. SUPPORT
- Dogs used in medical and veterinary research. Generally speaking, we see the need for research using animal subjects, but obviously they need to be handled as humanely as possible. Most research facilities, both academic and private, have ethics review boards to evaluate the need for animal subjects. We believe most of those do a good job, so we question the need for these Bills. NEUTRAL
    - **SB701 –** Regulating kennels that produce dogs for research
    - **SB702 –** Amend Dog Law regarding research kennels
    - **SB703 –** Amend Cruelty Laws regarding research kennels
- **SB746** (Vogel) – Dog Law Modernization. See also HB1322.
  The PFDC has long supported increasing funding for the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement. Since millions of dollars were taken out of the Dog Law Restricted Account to balance the General Fund budget in 2009, the BDLE has been running in the red and needing infusions of tax dollars to stay in operation. The increases in individual license fees and kennel license fees are moderate, especially considering it has been decades since they were last changed.
  Since we were able to get an amendments to both SB746 and HB1322 to protect the Health Certificate exemption for dogs coming into the Commonwealth for show, trials and other competitions, we support the Bill and encourage members of our member organisations to contact their state Senators and Representatives in Harrisburg to support them.
  Some welcome changes include:
    - Individual dog licenses will no longer cost more for unaltered dogs.
    - The PA Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement will be required to develop a web site to allow dog owners to purchase licenses online. We believe this will greatly increase individual dog licensing compliance.
    - Future dog license and kennel license fees will be a matter of regulation. It will not be necessary to pass a Bill to change them going forward. However, we will still have a say with the PA Regulatory Review Board when new rates are requested, and Legislators have the ability to stop regulatory changes with a simple majority vote.
    - The threshold for licensing a puppy will remain at 12 weeks *or when ownership of the puppy is transferred to anyone.* Sellers will be required to provide licensing paperwork to the buyers, but the responsibility will be on the buyers to obtain the license.
- **SB785** (Yaw) – Animal Advisory Board. This board shall review existing laws and regulations in this Commonwealth related to keeping and handling of animals and make recommendations for legislative and regulatory changes. The board shall meet at least every two years, or as they see fit, to fulfill the duties under this act. The board shall develop an initial report making certain recommendations or regulatory changes that would need brought before the General Assembly.
    - This board will consist of the following:

- The Secretary of Agriculture or a designee.
- One member who is a resident of this Commonwealth from each of the following:
    - The University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.
    - The College of Agricultural Sciences of The Pennsylvania State University.
    - The American Kennel Club.
    - The Federated Humane Societies of Pennsylvania.
    - The Northeast Beagle Gundog Federation.
    - The Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
    - The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.
    - PennAg Industries Association.
    - The Pennsylvania State Grange.
    - The Insurance Federation of Pennsylvania.
    - The Office of Attorney General.
    - The Pennsylvania State Police.
    - The Pet Advocacy Network.
- Two members who are residents of this Commonwealth from each of the following:
    - The Pennsylvania Federation of Dog Clubs, at least one of whom represents a licensed kennel.
    - The Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association.

The Legislative Committee of the PFDC supports Senator Yaw in his efforts and appreciates the opportunity of two (2) seats at the table. Should this bill pass and the Advisory Board becomes a reality, we are well aware that this will be a battleground of animal rights vs animal welfare. However, we are prepared for the challenge of reviewing those existing bills that need amended and new bills that require scrutiny. This will be our opportunity to educate legislators by voicing our needs and positions regarding current and future legislation. We will make every effort to align our positions with like-minded animal welfare members of the board and continue to protect our member clubs, their members, breeders and their dogs.

HOUSE BILLS

- **HB86 –** Legislation to allow any 501c3 or 501c6 organization to sell liquor for fundraising purposes. Neutral
- **HB139** – Taking the Judiciary out of Dog Law – under current law, all fines, fees & costs collected are deposited into the Judicial System account. The transfers include amounts imposed under Act 225 – AKA – Dog Law – that would be used to fund the operations of the Dept of Ag, which oversees Dog Law Enforcement. This legislation addresses this issue by exempting fines, fees & costs under the Dog Law from being transferred to the Judicial Computer System. Accounts for approximately 200K per year. SUPPORT
- **HB222-** Cruelty to Animals – violation causing bodily harm due to cropping, trimming or cutting off the whole or part of the ear or ears of the animal by a person who is not a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.
    - 1st offense – misdemeanor of the 2nd degree
    - 2nd offense – misdemeanor of the 1st degree

  SUPPORT
- **HB449 –** Kidnapping of Animals – Establishes tough penalties for intentionally selling or taking of any dog, cat, equine, swine, cattle – any animal – to resell to puppy mills, research facilities or animal Fighters. SUPPORT
- **HB508 –** Banning of cat declawing – specifically refers to only cats, however, it refers to “animal mutilation”, which we all should know that the AR groups refer to dewclaw removal, cropping & docking

as “mutilation.” This is a private decision between the owner and their vet. (Should this bill pass, their next step would be dogs.) OPPOSE

- **HB526 –** Requires pet shops to provide all health, medical and breeder licensing numbers – “keeping breeders honest” SUPPORT
- **HB529 –** Animal Cruelty – Transporting dogs – supported by the American Humane Society – prohibits transporting of dogs unrestrained in truck beds or car roofs. This proposal will “not apply to a dog transported in a secured insulated cage or container which is designed to facilitate the safe transportation of a dog and will prevent the dog from being exposed to outside weather conditions and from falling, jumping or being thrown from the vehicle.” SUPPORT
- **HB530 –** Animal cruelty – Restriction of Animal Ownership – all “convicted” abusers prohibited from owning, possessing, controlling or working w/animals for at least 2 years – also requires abusers to participate in violence prevention counseling. *NOTE-Refers to Libre’s Law (Act10)- Over 25,000 Animal abuse cases have been filed statewide – 54% for neglect. OPPOSE
- **HB549-** All Dogs Equal - All Dogs in all kennels should be held to the same State licensed standard that requires specific construction, heating, cooling, exercise, etc. *NOTE- Rescue/rehomers are generally not State licensed. This bill would include those groups. SUPPORT
- **HB607-** Introduces legislation to permit the Attorney General to investigate & institute criminal proceedings for a felony offense regarding animal cruelty to animals. This would permit the assistance of the Attorney General in prosecuting animal cruelty cases in counties which have little experience in doing so. *NOTE – The Attorney General’s office is in partnership with the HU. OPPOSE
- **HB689 -** Applies to crimes & offenses relating to sexual intercourse with an animal. *NOTE- We read this bill specifically searching for AI use. In another state where a similar proposal was introduced, it included artificial insemination as a sexual offense. That was not listed in this bill, so we are concerned about its intent. We want Representative Jordan Harris to clarify the proposal’s intent on that topic. NEUTRAL
- **HB1052** – Exempting Detection Dogs from licensing. SUPPORT
- **HB1099 –** Defend the Flock. On the surface, this Bill is about poultry flocks. However, the definitions in it concern us because they could be interpreted to apply to all domestic animals. We are currently NEUTRAL but will continue to monitor it.
- **HB1322** (Pashinski) – Dog Law Modernization. See SB746 above.

PA SENATE RESOLUTIONS

- **SR57 –** Sen. Mastriano, Designate March 13, 2023 as “K9 Veterans & Service Day” in PA. “Canine services include dogs and their handlers, trainers & other helpers involved in police services, drug enforcement, customs, border patrol, secret service, military, and many other capacities. In my view they have earned our thanks for their efforts to protect us all.” SUPPORT

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

- **HR1624 – Puppy Protection Act.** This HU back proposal is an incremental approach to bringing everything we do under Federal oversight. It is their common one-size-fits-all approach that mandates practices down to a minute level. The mandates include…

<u>Prohibiting the breeding of a female dog:</u>

- Unless pre-screened by a veterinarian
- Based arbitrarily on the age and size of the dog.
- If it would produce more than two litters in an 18-month period.

<u>Additional arbitrary requirements include but are not limited to</u>:

- Mandated unfettered access from dogs' primary enclosures to an outdoor exercise area large enough that it "allows dogs to extend to full stride". This would create a potentially dangerous environment for multiple dogs.
- Mandated annual dental exams.
- Mandated indoor space sufficient to allow the tallest dog in an enclosure to stand on his or her hind legs without touching the roof of the enclosure. For family dogs that live in their owner's homes, the primary enclosure may be considered the dog's sleeping crate.
- Mandated pre-breeding screenings. No specific details are provided for what the screening would involve or who would make these decisions.
- Prohibition on the keeping of dogs in enclosures above 85° or below 45° F, regardless of breed or acclimation needs for dogs that hunt, sled, detect explosives, or do other work and thrive in cooler temperatures, or that must be acclimated to cooler or warmer temperatures for their safety.
- Completely solid flooring, despite scientific recognition that multiple types of high-quality flooring, including engineered slatted flooring, is beneficial in certain types of kennels and with certain breeds.

https://www.akc.org/legislative-alerts/us-congress-proposed-breeder-restrictions-impact-tell-congress-oppose
The PFDC believes humane legislation and kennel regulation belong at the state level. **OPPOSE HR1624**

- **HR1788 Include Livestock & Poultry in the AWA (Goldies Bill) –** more incrementalism on the part of those who are opposed to any animal ownership, including our dogs. They use the phrase "puppy mills" in reference to USDA licensed kennels, which they are not. It tries to define "suffering" as almost anything short of pushing them around in a baby carriage. The proponents are attempting to include the proposal in the current Farm Bill. **OPPOSE**

Supreme Court ruling on California Pork Import regulations
On the surface, it seems this has nothing to do with dogs or us. Unfortunately, that is not true. The ruling carries a precedence that is still being evaluated. It could lead to California's exceedingly strict animal laws being applied to breeders in the rest of the country. Everyone should pay attention to this developing story.

Respectively submitted, PFDC Legislative Committee