



COMMERCIAL BREEDERS FACING LIMIT LAWS AND INSPECTION FEES IN MICHIGAN

**** PLACES 50 DOG LIMIT ON COMMERCIAL
BREEDING KENNELS ****

The Issue:

Michigan is considering four bills pertaining to the regulation of “large-scale commercial breeding kennels”. Companion bills, House Bill 5231 and Senate Bill 891, known as the “Puppy Protection Act”, provide a list of facility standards and standards of care for these kennels and makes violators guilty of a misdemeanor. HB 5231 and SB 891 also impose a 50 dog limit on commercial breeding kennels. House Bill 5230 and Senate Bill 892 call for compliance with the “Puppy Protection Act” and require large-scale commercial kennels to apply for an operating license as well as pay a \$500 inspection fee to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Impact:

[SB 891/ HB 5231](#)

This legislation, known as the “Puppy Protection Act”, states that “a person who operates a large-scale commercial breeding kennel shall not house more than 15 female intact dogs for the purpose of breeding unless the dogs and puppies in the large-scale commercial breeding kennel are provided with all of the following:

- Adequate housing;
- Adequate sanitary conditions;
- Sufficient room for each dog and puppy to turn and stretch freely;
- Adequate food and water;
- Regular exercise;
- Adequate veterinary care;
- Adequate rest between breeding cycles; and
- Adequate shelter from the elements.

(Please refer to the text of this legislation for definitions of each of these criteria.)

The bills prohibit ANY person from owning, possessing, controlling, or otherwise having charge or custody of more than 50 female intact dogs at any time at any single location.

The Act does NOT apply to the following:

- During the lawful examination, testing, operation, or other individual treatment of a dog or puppy for veterinary purposes;
- During the transportation of a dog or puppy;
- Pet shops;
- Animal control shelters;
- Animal protection shelters;
- Certain scientific research conducted using a dog/puppy; and
- A person or breeder who houses 15 or fewer female intact dogs.

A person who violates this Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and punishable by one or more of the following:

- Imprisonment for up to 93 days;
- A fine of at least \$1,000 for each violation;
- Suspension of large-scale commercial breeding kennel license for at least one year; or
- Complete revocation of the person's large-scale commercial breeding kennel license.

[HB 892/SB 5230](#)

These companion bills define a “large-scale” commercial breeding kennel” as “a kennel where more than 15 female intact dogs are housed for the purpose of breeding”. The bills require “any person who operates a large-scale commercial breeding kennel to apply annually to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for a large-scale commercial breeding kennel license”. This legislation also requires applicants to pay an annual \$500 site inspection fee to the department.

Before a large-scale commercial breeding kennel license is issued, the department must inspect the kennel to make sure the facility complies with all the criteria set forth in the “Puppy Protection Act” (as stated above). Any person granted a license must comply with all of the provisions provided in the “Puppy Protection Act” and ensure that each dog that is 12-weeks of age or older at the kennel is vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian.

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC supports humane standards of care, and requirements that breeders keep animals in a responsible fashion. However, PIJAC strongly opposes legislation that includes an arbitrary limit on the number of dogs a breeder may have, because there is no correlation between the number of animals in a facility and the quality of care those animals receive. PIJAC also opposes excessive license fees and standards that are overly burdensome or inconsistent with recognized appropriate standards of care.

Recommended Action:

[HB 5230](#) and [HB 5231](#) are both in the [House Regulatory Reform Committee](#). [SB 891](#) and [SB 892](#) have been placed in the [Senate Agriculture Committee](#). None of the bills have been set for hearing. However, if this bill affects you we urge you to read the complete text of the bills (see links above) and contact these committees with any questions and concerns. You may wish to make the following points when discussing this bill:

- While these bills ostensibly help dogs and cats, in reality they will put quality breeders out of business, thereby reducing the availability of healthy puppies and kittens to the pet loving public and creating a market vacuum to be filled by unscrupulous breeders.

- There is no correlation between the size of a breeding facility and the quality of care provided to animals in that facility. Legislation truly intending to benefit breeding animals should target breeding facilities that are maintained under substandard conditions, regardless of the number of animals they may have.
- Imposing an arbitrary limit on the number of animals one may possess does nothing to advance animal welfare; the only way to ensure humane care is to establish reasonable standards under which breeders may keep these animals, and ensure that they are effectively enforced.
- This bill will increase the incidence of defects in dogs and cats by unnecessarily limiting the diversity in breeding stock, thereby limiting the availability of blood lines for breeders.

If you have additional questions, contact PIJAC's Bambi Nicole Osborne by email at bambi@pijac.org or by phone at 202-452-1525, ext. 105. **PIJAC urges breeders to contact us with your specific concerns about provisions of this legislation.**