

December 9, 2008

Senator Gary Cates  
Members of the State and Local Government and Veterans Affairs  
Committee

In re an amendment for HB 446



Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc. opposes HB 446 for many reasons, but none is more important than the excessive increase in kennel license fees in the new language for ORC 955.04. The bill deletes the five free tags provided with each kennel license and the \$1 fee for additional tags and replaces them with a scheme that creates an unfair burden for law-abiding kennel owners.

Under HB 446, a breeder with 10 dogs could see his annual kennel license fee of \$50 skyrocket to \$150, and a breeder with 20 dogs would see a new annual bill of \$250. Representative Webster has never explained why this huge increase is necessary, and we respectfully request that the committee ask him for his reason.

OVDO members have no objection to individual licenses for all dogs, so in our discussions with Representative Webster and his staff, we proposed an amendment to HB 446 that would resolve this issue without placing an unreasonable financial burden on kennel license holders. He declined to make the change. We therefore suggest an amendment to the committee that deletes the new language in ORC 955.04 and replaces the current language with

“The payment of such kennel registration fee shall entitle the licensee to five tags to bear consecutive numbers and to be assigned to specific dogs. Any remaining dogs in the kennel must be individually licensed at a fee of two dollars each unless a greater fee has been established under ORC 955.14. The fee for additional dog registration shall not exceed five dollars. Each dog in the kennel shall be individually described as required in accordance with ORC 955.01 on a kennel registration form to be approved by the county auditor and shall be assigned a license tag in consecutive order following the order of the original five tags.”

Many show or hobby breeders keep puppies they can't place along with retired breeding dogs, performance dogs, chronically ill dogs, and dogs that are not breeding quality. Thus someone who breeds one litter per year may have 10 or even 20 or more dogs that are not being bred. We believe that these breeders should not be penalized with an outrageous fee increase.

We also believe that those who sell puppies as a business should not have their license fees arbitrarily raised. The fees in HB 446 amount to a tax increase that places a huge financial burden on those who sell puppies to supplement family income.

Thank you for the opportunity to enter these comments into the record. I will be happy to answer any questions if you contact me at the e-mail address or telephone number below.

Sincerely,

Norma Bennett Woolf, president, Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc.

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**Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc.**  
6241 N. State Route 48 ♦ Lebanon, Ohio 45036  
(513) 932-3176 ♦ [ovdog01@canismajor.com](mailto:ovdog01@canismajor.com)  
[www.canismajor.com/orgs/ovdo](http://www.canismajor.com/orgs/ovdo)

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