



July 19, 2005

Senator Saxby Chambliss, chairman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
Room SR-328A  
Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC. 20510-6000

To the honorable chairman and committee members:

In re: **Opposition to S1139, an amendment to the Animal Welfare Act.**

Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc. is a coalition of dog owners, dog clubs, and dog-related businesses in southwestern Ohio. We work in our area and our state for reasonable laws that protect dogs, dog owners, and our neighbors.

OVDO opposes S1139 because it

- completely changes the intent of the Animal Welfare Act by redefining some home breeders as animal dealers;
- will be prohibitively expensive to enforce, a direct conflict to the desire of the Bush Administration and Congress to reduce the size of government; and
- will add an unnecessary regulatory layer to existing state, local, and private efforts to protect animal welfare.

The AWA was passed to assure the welfare of animals in wholesale and research facilities that are generally not open to the public. Home breeders who sell directly to pet buyers were never a target in either the law or the regulations. It is absolutely unwarranted to change that original intent in today's environment of state and local laws that protect animal welfare, more inspections by animal registries, an emphasis on breeding ethics by animal clubs, and a monumental increase in public education about pet breeding practices.

**Costs:** The vast majority of home breeders produce puppies in low-risk circumstances regardless of the number of litters they whelp or puppies they sell. Placing federal inspectors in their homes will undoubtedly increase the USDA budget or require a shift in enforcement tactics and thereby divert resources from higher-risk commercial kennels. Furthermore, such inspections would be redundant as home breeders are already subject to oversight from the public, from state or local authorities, and in many cases, from inspections by the AKC.

**Regulations:** Current USDA regulations are written for large-scale facilities that house dozens or hundreds of dogs. Private homes are unlikely to have floors and walls impervious to moisture or to keep their “dog areas” free of clutter, furniture, and equipment. Therefore, the agency budget will be stretched further by a time-consuming and costly project to write new regulations for private homes while they are also grappling with food safety issues such as BSE, bioterrorism, and biotechnology.

We appreciate consideration of our opposition to S1139 as an unwarranted government intrusion into the home breeding of dogs, a budget boondoggle in a time of federal deficit, and a distraction from USDA’s far more important task of protecting the safety of our food supply. Therefore, we respectfully ask that you kill this bill in committee.

Sincerely

Norma Bennett Woolf, president  
Ohio Valley Dog Owners Inc.  
8461 Denallen Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45255  
(513) 474-3378; ovdogo@canismajor.com