

IaFed INFORMER 2009

Iowa Federation of Animal Owners: Working to preserve your future as an animal owner!

With the continued dedication of our lobbyist, Jill Altringer, IaFed is working diligently again this year both at the capitol and in the field to educate our legislators about the professional pet industry. We are providing a watchdog service on both the state and federal level to prevent the passing of damaging legislation.

ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL.....

Legislation to further regulate dog owners and breeders has run rampant across the nation! Every week we receive word that another state has had legislation introduced concerning owning and breeding dogs. 34 or more states were targeted in 2009. The legislation involves dog number limits, restrictions of interstate commerce in dogs, breeding limits, breed specific legislation, spay and neuter laws, invasive applications for a license to raise dogs, and etc. In one instance, a dog fighting bill had been used to introduce language that would be harmful for all dog owners. There is great pressure for our legislators to buckle to the demands of animal rights' groups because big campaign donations are like gold mines and the fear of a public smearing is ever present.

We continue to monitor action in Washington, D.C. We feel the only reason we have not had to fly into action is the state of our economy. Lawmakers have been very preoccupied with trying to "fix" the economy! We expect to see a new version of the PUPS Bill at any time. The challenge to defeat federal legislation will be tremendous with our current administration.

USDA has now closed the comment period regarding an emergency contingency plan for all their regulated facilities. It will probably be months before we hear the conclusions they draw on from the comments. IaFed wishes to thank everyone that sent in comments. We need to be sure we voice our opinions when we are given the opportunity.

USDA licensed facilities have received word that all inspection reports will be posted on the APHIS website. This action has been waiting in the wings for quite some time so it comes as no surprise. It is part of a plan to make government more "transparent" according to Dr. Gipson. His letter of explanation is posted on the APHIS website. In the end, this development could be a positive action for the dog breeding industry as having one's inspection report available at the click of a button is a great incentive to make sure all is in order!

ON THE STATE LEVEL.....

IaFed had to concentrate most of our efforts so far this year on a bill that would place USDA licensed kennels under state regulation as well. Currently, other than receiving a certificate of registration, USDA licensees are exempt from state regulation. We worked hard to get the bill amended so a USDA licensed kennel would only be inspected by the state if a **valid** complaint was submitted to the Agriculture Department. In the end, no language was passed. We can give credit to IaFed's lobbyist, Jill Altringer for going over and beyond her call of duty to prevent the bill from passing as it was worded. We also are beholden to several legislators for their great support and help. The battle did not end until the gavel fell to adjourn the 2009 legislative session! We appreciated those of you who took the time to contact legislators to ask them to oppose this bill when IaFed sent out the plea for help!

PLANS FOR 2009

IaFed will be working hard to educate licensed dog breeders in Iowa as to the need to be actively involved in defending their rights. We are facing an opposition that works across the nation with an approximate 150 million dollar annual budget and a gigantic employee and volunteer force. We have noticed that certain parts of the state are not well represented in supporting IaFed or IaPBA. Some informative meetings have already been held to impress upon dog breeders the importance of getting involved. We cannot stand alone and survive the attacks of our opposition, as they are becoming very bold.

We will also be organizing kennel tours for our state legislators. We need volunteers to participate in this venture. It is time to move beyond simply showing one kennel all the time. Our legislators need to know that there are many good kennels in Iowa.

It is also necessary that each licensed dog breeder makes an effort to contact his/her legislators and spend some time explaining our industry. They need to hear from our side as they are constantly being

bombarded with horror stories and repulsive pictures. Our opposition uses emotion and compassion to sway public opinion. Facts become distorted and intermingled with untruths. Unfortunately, it is human nature to believe the worst and any sense of reason easily takes wing in the face of such stories.

IaFed also needs to go on a money raising campaign. We need more money or our battle is lost. Every licensed, responsible dog breeder needs to contribute one dollar for every puppy raised and sold so we can continue to work on your behalf. We have been functioning at half speed and our time is running out. We cannot depend on pet industry vendors to provide all the necessary funds for our fight. We are very thankful for the licensed dog breeders that have willingly contributed money to IaFed. However, the percentage of over 600 licensed facilities in Iowa that have actually sent us money is pathetically small. It cannot continue this way or IaFed will cease to exist. The animal rights activists will get their way and you will no longer have a business. Believe us, we are not exaggerating! ***The HSUS has published a 100 point agenda involving animals that they plan to prioritize and implement. We will leave you to guess where "puppy mills" will be placed!***

Let's all band together to fight for our rights to own and raise animals responsibly in Iowa!

.....*Joe Gerst, IaFed Chairman*

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You Need IaFed...IaFed Needs You!