



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

**Larry Hogan**, Governor  
**Boyd K. Rutherford**, Lt. Governor  
**Joseph Bartenfelder**, Secretary  
**Julianne A. Oberg**, Deputy Secretary

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building  
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
www.mda.maryland.gov

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

410.841.5880 Baltimore/Washington  
410.841.5914 Fax  
800.492.5590 Toll Free

## Task Force to Study Canine Breeding Facilities and Sourcing Standards Meeting Minutes September 29, 2021

### Task Force Members Present

- Senator Ben Kramer (co-chair)
- Delegate Kathleen Dumais (co-chair)
- Steve Connelly, Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Animal Industries and Consumer Services
- Michael Steadman, Assistant Attorney General, Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Dr. Katie Withowski, small animal veterinarian with significant experience working with canine breeders
- Susan Sarubin, expert in canine behavior
- Charley Hall, American Kennel Club
- Sara Yassin, Bailing Out Benji
- Lisa Radov, Maryland Votes for Animals
- Kathleen Summers, Humane Society of the United States
- Jeremy Krum, attorney with a practice concentration in animal welfare law
- Jeff Shepherd, Supervisory Animal Care Specialist, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Animal Care Program
- Cassie Shirk, staff to the task force

### I. Welcome

- A. Cassie Shirk, staff to the task force, went over housekeeping items, including a dedicated page for the task force on MDA's website - [https://mda.maryland.gov/about\\_mda/Pages/taskforce-caninebreeding.aspx](https://mda.maryland.gov/about_mda/Pages/taskforce-caninebreeding.aspx)
- B. Senator Kramer mentioned the U.S. District Court Decision on the challenge to constitutionality of SB 103.

### II. Approval of the August 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- A. Lisa Radov made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Jeremy Krum seconded. All were in favor.

### III. Presentations

- A. Animal Welfare Regulations by Jeff Shepherd, Supervisory Animal Care Specialist, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Animal Care Program

1. The Animal Welfare Act regulates animals and activities that affect interstate or foreign commerce to ensure:
    - a) Humane care and treatment of animals in research, exhibition or intended for use as pets
    - b) Humane care and treatment during transportation in commerce
    - c) To protect owners from the theft of their animals by preventing the sale or use of animals which have been stolen
  2. Anyone who sells pet animals generally require a license unless a person: maintains four or fewer breeding females and sells the offspring, born and raised on his/her premises, for pets or exhibition
  3. Veterinary Care - Each Breeder must have an attending veterinarian and must maintain a program of veterinary care (PVC)
  4. General requirements for what the facility needs to do in order to maintain an appropriate living area for pets:
    - a) Indoor and Outdoor Housing Facilities
    - b) Primary Enclosures
    - c) Additional Space
    - d) Exercise
    - e) Feeding and Watering
- B. U.S. Commercial Breeder Laws 2021 by Kathleen Summers, Humane Society of the United States
1. Federal law - USDA is the regulatory agency in charge of enforcing the federal Animal Welfare Act.
  2. States that limit the number of dogs a breeder can have on a property:
    - a) Virginia: 50 dogs
    - b) Louisiana: 75 dogs
    - c) Michigan (the license MAY specify a limit)
    - d) Washington: 50 dogs
    - e) Oregon: 50 dogs
  3. Five states have banned the sale of puppies in retail pet stores (*\*Grandfathers a few current stores but will prohibit new ones from selling puppies*):
    - a) California
    - b) Maryland
    - c) Maine\*
    - d) Washington\*
    - e) illinois (signed recently)
  4. Current Maryland law:
    - a) A person shall obtain a kennel license if they have custody of 15 or more unspayed female dogs over the age of 6 months kept for the purpose of breeding & selling, AND sell 6 or more litters annually.

- b) Each county shall collect and maintain information for each license issued and report information to the Dept. of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation once a year.
  - c) Counties and larger municipalities all have different standards and definitions for how they interpret this state law, leading to a patchwork of standards and regulations
  - d) MD has no state requirement for breeders to be inspected or comply with specific standards of care. That means Maryland has no statewide standards for cage size, veterinary requirements (other than rabies shots), nor limits on the number of dogs that can be kept on one property.
5. A chart/overview of state breeder laws:  
<https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/puppy-mills-faq#laws>
- C. Pet Sourcing Solutions: Ensuring the Best for All Dogs by Jennifer Clark, American Kennel Club (AKC)
- 1. Multifaceted approach emphasizes AKC expertise:
    - a) AKC programs that help all dogs
    - b) Legislative & Educational Resources
  - 2. AKC is the only all-breed registry in the US with a national kennel inspections program
    - a) Launched in 1996 to address animal welfare concerns
    - b) Ensures compliance with AKC Care and Conditions Policy
    - c) Creates teachable moments and provides breeder education opportunities
  - 3. Jennifer walked through the AKC's new breeding program called "AKC Bred With H.E.A.R.T."
  - 4. According to the CDC, over 1 million dogs are imported every year.
  - 5. AKC has concerns with some laws around the country which are forcing buyers to unregulated sources. A solution to issues like this would be to expand consumer protection.
  - 6. There were several follow up questions asked to the AKC by the task force. The AKC agreed to follow up in writing with those answers.

#### IV. Open Discussion

- A. The chairs thanked the presenters and the task force, and mentioned that we'd have one additional meeting to discuss the final report.