



Irish Wolfhound Club of America, Inc.

April 23, 2011
The Honorable Joe Straus
Speaker of the House
House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Subject: **OPPOSE Texas House Bill 1451: 'Relating to the licensing and regulation of certain dog and cat breeders; providing penalties'**

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am writing on behalf of the Irish Wolfhound Club of America (IWCA). The IWCA is the parent club for Irish Wolfhound owner's nation-wide, as well as the anchor for 14 regional and local clubs. The IWCA is opposed to Texas HB 1451. Texas HB 1451, as currently proposed, is a misguided bill, containing unreasonable, biased requirements and regulations that are not based on proven animal husbandry practices, nor does it improve the welfare of animals. Areas of concern include:

- Establishing the definition of a 'Commercial Breeder' based on the arbitrary number of 11 intact dogs or cats is not based on any proven animal husbandry practices. Numbers neither equate to the level of care a dog or cat receives nor provides a reasonable parameter for defining a 'breeding kennel'.
- There are no exceptions provided for 'hobby breeders', 'sporting, working, hunting dogs or service dogs'.
- Specifications, no matter how detailed, do not ensure the humane care and welfare of any animal, regardless of the number of animals in question. 'Kennel' inspections cannot ensure the daily care and welfare of an animal, regardless of how many animals there are in a 'location'. Texas already has the Animal Cruelty Statute, which establishes the basic standards of care for all animals.
- The provision mandating unannounced inspections by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, or other authorized third party representatives every 18 months would result in excessive costs. These expenses are to be recovered via unspecified fees for licensure and inspections. The specified thresholds applied to define a 'breeder' will result in unannounced, 'warrantless' searches of private residences, not just 'breeding' facilities. Search of private residences should be performed pursuant to the issuance of a warrant.
- This bill, as proposed, is disingenuous and does not address the problem of irresponsible breeders, rather with its definitions and numerical approach to targeting individuals, it severely limits the rights of responsible breeders.

As such, the IWCA, on behalf of its membership, many of whom are residents of Texas, respectfully urges you to vote "NO" when Texas HB 1451 comes before the House.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Munroe White
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Legislative Committee
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Cc: Members of the Texas State House

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