

Panelists Discuss Pet Animal Welfare Statute Act for Dogs & Cats

The legislation affects the regulation of the puppy breeder industry.

The law calls for regulation of large commercial breeders who sell directly to the public, Internet dealers and non-breeders who sell more than 25 dogs or cats per year. It also would require a USDA license for breeders who breed seven or more litters of dogs or cats per year.

By regulating high-volume retail sellers, we will assure that they meet the same standards for the humane care and treatment of animals that breeders and brokers selling at wholesale have been meeting for 30 years, said Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), who sponsored the bill.

Four individuals represented the animal interest group panel at the hearing, including Ron Menaker, chairman of the American Kennel Club; Henry Childers, DVM, president of the American Veterinary Medical Association; John Hoffman, a dog fancier; and Michael Maddox, legislative director of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, a pet industry lobby group.

Three individuals represented the animal welfare group panel, including Wayne Pacelle, president and chief executive officer of the Humane Society of the United States; Sara Amundson, legislative director of the Doris Day Animal League; and Norma Worley, director of the Maine Department of Agriculture animal welfare program. The panelist voiced support of the bill, though several pointed to what they saw as flaws in the legislation, including ambiguous definitions of wild animal and pet dealer, which they said may lead to confusion over what animals and what dealers are regulated by the legislation.

Opponents of the bill include many show and hobby breeders, the Cat Fanciers Association, the U.S. Sportsman Alliance, the United Kennel Club and the American Dog Owners Association, reported the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Posted: Nov. 10, 2005 at 1 p.m. EST