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Eric.Bagwell@mail.house.gov

**Congressman Bob Goodlatte  
Sixth District of Virginia**

# Fax



**To:** Brian Baenig

**From:** Eric Bagwell, District Representative,

Congressman Bob Goodlatte

202-720-8077

**Fax:**

**Pages:** 3 (including cover)

**Phone:**

**Date:** 8/30/2012

**Re:** Constituent Inquiry

**Urgent**     **For Review**     **Please Comment**     **Please Reply**     **Please Recycle**

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**BOB GOODLATTE**  
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# Congress of the United States House of Representatives

August 30, 2012

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AND FORESTRY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
LIVESTOCK, DAIRY, AND POULTRY

Mr. Brian Baenig  
Associate Director for Congressional Affairs  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
209-A Whitten Building  
Washington, D.C. 20250

VIA FAX

Dear Mr. Baenig:

Attached please find an e-mail that I have received from my constituent, Ms. Beth Dalton, regarding her concerns of the impact the Animal Welfare Act could have on hobby breeders.

I would appreciate your looking into this matter and providing me with a response for my constituent. Please mail your response to my Harrisonburg office at the address marked below.

Thank you for your assistance.

With kind regards.

Very truly yours,

Bob Goodlatte  
Member of Congress

RWG:eb

Attachment



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From: "Beth Dalton" <eastwindaustshep@aol.com>  
Date: 6/21/2012 10:29:18 AM  
To: "imava06" <va06ima@mail.house.gov>  
Cc:  
Subject: Email from Website - Constituent Letter to Congress

I am a voting resident in your district and I need your help. Recently, APHIS, an agency of the USDA, has proposed a new rule. The rule attempts to broadly expand the regulatory authority of the USDA to include previously exempt small pet breeders. If passed people will be forced to spend thousands of dollars to bringing their home into compliance with the Animal Welfare Act and open to regular inspections by the Federal government. Most hobby breeders, show & only have 1-2 litters a yr. They will not be able to sell a puppy taken in loo of a stud fee, which is very common. USDA will rely on complains from someone with a grudge, possibly someone you wouldn't sell a puppy to. & i understand they would get a reward \$.

The Animal Welfare Act was never intended to apply to retail pet stores and small breeders. By ending this exemption for those who sell their pets online or outside of the premises of their breeding facility, the Dept. of Agriculture would be unfairly expanding its regulatory authority. Breeders are already stressed to meet the numerous local, state, and federal regulations which are constantly in flux. This new rule will only make it more difficult At the same time, the rule would fail to address the problem of rogue breeders who are already operating without regard for the law.

As this change affects those who breed dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice, gophers, chinchilla, domestic ferrets, domestic farm animals, birds, and cold-blooded species, I have no doubt that many people in your district will be harmed by its passage. The worst part is that APHIS admits that there is no evidence to suggest that pets sold over the internet are at any more risk of health issues than those sold in traditional pet stores.

I fear that the bureaucracy is under pressure from radical animal rights activists who want to see pet breeders regulated out of existence. Please help me in fighting this APHIS rule. A call from your office stating your opposition to the new rule would go a long way. I would also like to see APHIS subpoenaed to appear before Congress to explain to the American people their reasoning behind this ill-advised rule.

Pet breeders in your district are counting on you, and we will remember in November those who helped save our industry!

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE  
SECRETARIAL, USDA

**OCR CORRESPONDENCE: 22**

*APHIS*  

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**ACTION OFFICE**