House Government Accountability and Oversight committee

HB 506, Revise Law Governing High Volume Dog Breeders

 Opponent Testimony by Linda Goldstien March 7,2018

Good morning, Chair Blesing, Vice Chair Reineke and Ranking Minority Member Clyde,

 I am Linda Goldstein, a Cuyahoga County resident. I have been involved in dog rescue for over 15 years. In that capacity I have been involved with the rescue and rehabilitation of numerous "puppy mill" dogs. I am also a first responder for Red Rover, a national sheltering organization who goes into puppy mill and hoarding situations. Our main job is to set up and man the shelters until rescue can be found for the dogs. In that capacity I have been a "boots on the ground" volunteer in at three puppy mill rescues. In both capacities I have seen the horrible inhumane conditions that these dogs have been subjected to. Sadly, HB 506 does little if anything to mitigate or improve these conditions.

The standards of care this bill purports to improve are minimal at best and does little to improve the health and well being of these animals.

In HB506 it states " to provide appropriate veterinary care, including vaccinations, parasite control, and prompt treatment for any disease, illness or injury. " What it fails to mandate is that a licensed vet be called. I have personally seen what "laymans care" means: It means dogs with cherry eyes, bull dogs that have been sliced open so often to retrieve the pups that it looks like bad zippers were put in with scarring to match, mammary tumors on overbred moms, infections that went untreated, splayed paws on small dogs trying to gain footing on the wire cages…the list goes on. HB 506 does NOTHING to alleviate this

What is even sadder is the emotional abuse these pups and moms endure. I personally owned a mill dog. His name was Nikki. I was actually part of the rescue operation that at that time were purchasing the dogs at the Buckeye Dog auction. I was a foster fail and adopted Nikki. He was less than 4 months old. Even though he was so young he suffered emotional trauma that he never recovered from. Because food was scarce he could not stop eating. Even though we fed him a high

quality dog food he was always hungry. He scavenged food from our garbage would steal it off our plates… he never seemed to believe that this meal would not be his last. But possibly the worse effect was his living in our closets. He literally would move from our upstairs bedroom closet to our downstairs hall closet …I guess he felt it was the only place he was safe. He rarely came out except for his walks and occasionally to sit on the couch for a few minutes before he headed back to the closet. Also, because he had little to no human contact in the early weeks of his development you could not pet him on his head…he would duck your hand. Possibly due to little handling or rough handling as a young pup.

This bill does NOTHING to allow dogs time out of crate or the ability to socialize with other dogs or people. The adopters of these dogs have little knowledge of what they are in for: emotional problems as well as behavioral or ongoing health issues that may not present themselves for years. This often times ends up with the dog being rehomed, sent to a rescue (who must then spend thousands on vet care to get the dog in good health again) a shelter or just being dumped on the side of the road.

Ohio had been known for years as the state where dogs go to die…Our state may be shaped like a heart but it certainly has not been compassionate or caring when it comes to our companion animals. But in recent years things have started to improve. This bill turns back the clock on those hard fought improvements.

Please VOTE NO on HB 506. This bill does little to protect the emotional and physical health of these puppies and moms and dads. It also opens unsuspecting families who in good faith purchase these pups to many expensive medical expenses or emotional trauma. God put animals in the care of man. Let us do the right thing and protect these animals. This bill is not the answer.