



State Senator Chuck Purgason

District 33

Press Release



Chuck Purgason
33rd Senatorial District
Capitol Building, Room 420
Jefferson City, MO 65101

For Immediate Release:
October 21, 2010
Contact:
Cheryl McGlynn
(573) 751-1882

Lawmakers Express Concerns About Misdirection of Prop B *Lawmakers Challenge Claim Regarding Number of Licensed Dog Breeders in Missouri*

JEFFERSON CITY – Lawmakers today, led by State Sen. Chuck Purgason, R-Caulfield, expressed their concerns to Missouri voters about Proposition B that will appear on the November ballot. In a press conference held at the State Capitol, Sen. Purgason, joined by lawmakers from the House and the Senate, said they want to see an end to puppy mills, but question the proposed law's effectiveness. If passed by Missouri voters, Proposition B, also known as the "Puppy Mill Initiative," would place greater restrictions and requirements on Missouri's fully licensed, small business dog breeders.

"We already have laws on the books to crack down on illegal dog breeding operations, plus licensed breeders must follow certain regulations in order to maintain the state's approval of their breeding operation," Sen. Purgason said. "Prop B would only add extreme requirements to licensed breeders. It does nothing to help us track down and close breeders operating illegally, plus it provides no resources either in funding or staffing to inspect current licensed breeders and search for those operating without a license."

Senator Purgason noted that many other legislators also have concerns as to whether the measure would make quality improvements to animal welfare and if the law would violate property laws.

Senator Bill Stouffer, R-Napton, noted that Proposition B will not stop canine abuse and will hurt the licensed breeders who truly care about raising dogs and providing them with loving homes.

"The licensed breeders in Missouri take pride in what they do, and they care about the animals," Sen. Stouffer said. "These kennels, many of them run by families, have spent money on improving and updating their facilities, and Proposition B would ruin all the hard work and money they have put in to their businesses. We want to protect our facilities and continue letting them do a good job."

Senator Purgason and Sen. Stouffer, as well as Rep. Tom Loehner, R-Koeltztown, and Rep. Rodney Schad, R-Versailles, agree the best way to end puppy mill abuse is through local cooperation with state inspectors working under current state laws.

"Licensed breeders follow regulations and new infrastructure costs would destroy businesses," said Rep. Loehner. Representative Schad said in agreement, "Missouri voters should see Prop B for what it is — an effort that would eliminate an industry in Missouri."

Lawmakers who share these concerns, but were unable to attend the event include Rep. Belinda Harris, D-Hillsboro; Rep. Kenneth Jones, R-California; Rep. Brian Munzlinger, R-Williamstown; and Rep. Jim Viebrock, R-Republic.

For more information on how to report questionable breeders, visit the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Bark Alert website www.mda.mo.gov/animals/ACFA/barkalert.

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