



OHIO TO TARGET KENNEL OWNERS FOR FELONY PROSECUTION

**** HEARING SET FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6TH****

The Issue:

The Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee is set to hear [House Bill 108](#) on Wednesday, April 6th. The bill subjects kennel owners to felony charges for violation of specific provisions of the state's animal cruelty statute which under provisions of the bill would be applied solely to those engaged in the business of breeding dogs.

The Impact:

House Bill 108 amends current Ohio animal cruelty laws, [Ohio Revised Code Title 9 Chapter 959](#), by adding that “no owner of a kennel of dogs who confines or is the custodian or caretaker of a companion animal shall negligently do any of the following:

- Torture, torment, needlessly mutilate or maim, cruelly beat, poison, needlessly kill, or commit an act of cruelty against the companion animal;
- Deprive the companion animal of necessary sustenance, confine the companion animal without supplying it during the confinement with sufficient quantities of good, wholesome food and water, or impound or confine the companion animal without affording it, during the impoundment or confinement, with access to shelter from heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, or excessive direct sunlight, if it can reasonably be expected that the companion animal would become sick or suffer in any other way as a result of or due to the deprivation, confinement, or impoundment or confinement in any of those specified manners.”

(NOTE: A “kennel owner” is defined as “a person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation professionally engaged in the business of breeding dogs for hunting or for sale.”)

HB 108 makes anyone found in violation of these new amendments guilty of a **felony** of the fifth degree. Because the provisions specifically apply to kennels, persons other than those who own and operate kennels would not be subject to felony prosecution even when committing precisely the same acts.

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC strongly supports the adoption and effective enforcement of laws prohibiting neglect and abuse of pet animals. Such laws should encompass all persons, whether pet owners or otherwise, and should not target a specific group for prosecution.

Recommended Action:

The House Criminal Justice Committee is scheduled to hear HB 108 at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 6, 2011 in Room 114 of State Capitol Building. All kennel owners in Ohio, as well as all others who share an interest in animal welfare and the right to have pets, should contact every [committee member](#) (click on the link for contact information) **prior to the hearing** to voice your concerns about this bill. You may also wish to attend the hearing to testify in person. Make sure legislators understand that animal abuse laws should apply equally to everyone!

If you have any additional questions or concerns please contact PIJAC's Bambi Nicole Osborne at 202-452-1525, ext. 105 or via email at bambi@pijac.org.

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The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has been protecting and promoting responsible pet ownership for nearly forty years. Follow our successes, events, and action alerts through Facebook and/or Twitter at PIJAC4pets. If you are not already a Member, please join us today by visiting www.pijac.org/membership. For additional information on PIJAC and its many exciting campaigns, please visit: www.pijac.org. Or, contact us at 1-800-553-PETS (1-800-553-7387); members@pijac.org.

On behalf of pets, responsible pet owners, and the pet industry, we thank you!