



House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

TO: All House Members

DATE: January 24, 2011

FROM: Representative Mario Scavello

SUBJECT: Amending Title 18 - Dog Tethering (Former HB 1254)

In the near future, I am planning to re-introduce legislation which will amend the animal cruelty provisions of the Crimes Code by placing restrictions on the tethering of dogs.

More specifically, my legislation will add a section to the animal cruelty statute by making it a summary offense to tether a dog outside and unattended to any stationary object by the use of a restraint between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. A person convicted of this offense may be subject to forfeiture of the dog.

This legislation is in response to repeated complaints that the continuous confinement of dogs by a tether is inhumane. A tether significantly restricts a dog's movement. A tether can also become tangled or hook on the dog's structure or other objects, further restricting the dog's movement and potentially causing injury.

While the legislation prohibits tethering during certain hours, persons will be able to use such restraints during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., however, they can be convicted of a summary offense if they fail to attach the tether in such manner as to avoid entanglement which restricts motion; attach the tether to a choke, pinch, prong or other chain; attach a tether which is less than six feet long or at least five times the length of the dog and which does not allow convenient access to shelter, food and water; the dog tethered has open sores or wounds on its body; the dog is tethered during periods of extreme weather such as periods of unusually cold or hot temperatures or when a weather advisory or warning has been issued.

The legislation contains certain exceptions which permit tethering a dog while training for an activity conducted pursuant to a valid license issued by the Commonwealth, if the activity for which the license is issued is associated with the use or presence of a dog; tethering while engaged in the business of shepherding or herding livestock; tethering while engaged in the

business of cultivating agricultural products; or tethering pursuant to the requirements of a camping or recreational area; if the period that the dog is tethered does not exceed 15 minutes as long as the dog is not in danger or a nuisance or put the public in danger; the dog tethered is being raised, trained or utilized for sled dog racing so long as the dog is regularly untethered for exercise and training; the dog is tethered while actively participating in or attending an organized dog show, field trial, agility event, herding contest, or other similar exposition or event, of a limited duration, that involves the judging or evaluation of dogs.

If you would like to co-sponsor this proposal, please contact Kendra Snuffer via email at ksnuffer@pahousegop.com or at 787-7732. Thank you.

Previous HB 1254 co-sponsors: SIPTROTH , CALTAGIRONE , BEYER , BRADFORD, BRENNAN , BRIGGS, BURNS, BUXTON , CARROLL , CASORIO , P. COSTA , CRUZ , DALLY , DePASQUALE , DIGIROLAMO , FABRIZIO , FRANKEL , FREEMAN , GINGRICH , GRUCELA , HARHAI , HARHART , HARKINS , HENNESSEY , W. KELLER , KILLION , KORTZ , MAHER , MANN , MELIO , MENSCH , MILNE , MOUL , MURPHY, MURT , MUSTIO , M. O'BRIEN , O'NEILL , PAYTON , READSHAW , REICHLEY , SAINATO , SANTONI , SCHRODER , SOLOBAY , J. TAYLOR , TRUE , WALKO , WATSON , YOUNGBLOOD , FARRY, M. SMITH , BELFANTI , MARKOSEK and GOODMAN