

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HEARING

STATE CAPITOL
RYAN OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 205
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

IN RE: HOUSE BILL 1463
DOG LICENSE FEES

BEFORE:

HONORABLE MARTIN CAUSER, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE EDDIE DAY PASHINSKI, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE STEPHEN BLOOM
HONORABLE KAREN BOBACK
HONORABLE RUSS DIAMOND
HONORABLE MINDY FEE
HONORABLE MARK GILLEN
HONORABLE MARCIA HAHN
HONORABLE RICH IRVIN
HONORABLE MARK KELLER
HONORABLE JOHN LAWRENCE
HONORABLE DAVE MILLARD
HONORABLE DAN MOUL
HONORABLE MIKE TOBASH
HONORABLE RYAN WARNER
HONORABLE DAVID ZIMMERMAN
HONORABLE PAMELA DiLISSIO
HONORABLE SID KAVULICH
HONORABLE MAUREEN MADDEN
HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER RABB
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COMMITTEE STAFF PRESENT:

**KERRY GOLDEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REPUBLICAN CAUCUS
MICHELE MUSGRAVE, LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT,
REPUBLICAN CAUCUS
DESTINY ZEIDERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS**

**JEAN M. DAVIS, REPORTER
NOTARY PUBLIC**

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 * * *

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Good morning,
4 everyone.

5 I'd like to call this meeting of the House
6 Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee to order and first
7 of all ask you to join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

8 (Pledge of Allegiance)

9 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Today's meeting is a
10 formal public hearing on House Bill 1463 sponsored by my
11 good friend Chairman Pashinski. I'm looking forward to the
12 testimony that will be provided.

13 As I said, this is a formal hearing so there will
14 be a transcript and the meeting is also being recorded for
15 those who can't be here. I know there are several meetings
16 going on this morning. I know some members will be in and
17 out but we will proceed.

18 I'm going to ask Michele to call the roll.

19 (Roll call)

20 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Michele.

21 We agreed to have this hearing because our
22 Minority Chairman sponsored House Bill 1463 and I know that
23 it's a priority for the Department of Agriculture. And in
24 the Senate, Senator Schwank also sponsored companion
25 legislation. This legislation would provide for an increase

1 in dog license fees and provide for an online licensing
2 platform for issuing dog licenses.

3 We issued our hearing notice rather early so that
4 interested parties could provide feedback. We have a number
5 of testifiers today to provide feedback on this legislation.
6 And in addition, we've received comments for the record from
7 a number of organizations. The members will find those
8 comments in your packets as additional correspondence.

9 Without further delay, I'd like to move forward
10 with the testimony. I'd like to welcome the Secretary of
11 Agriculture, Russell Redding. He's our first testifier.
12 Secretary Redding, welcome. You may proceed and introduce
13 anyone from the Department that's here with you.

14 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Mr. Chairman, it's
15 good to see you. It's good to see you up close.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

17 We'll give you signals, if necessary.

18 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: You can give me the
19 signal to move on or stop, whatever.

20 Chairman Pashinski, thank you as well. Good to
21 be here. And to the members of the Committee, it's always
22 good to be with you. Thank you for scheduling the hearing
23 and taking time to talk about the dog law in 1463.

24 I'm pleased today to have with me Kristin
25 Dunmoyer, who is the Director of the Bureau of Dog Law, and

1 Jonathan Hendrickson, who is our Legislative Director as
2 well and today is our IT specialist. He will be on the
3 PowerPoint.

4 I think you have a copy of the PowerPoint. You
5 have the testimony. I'm not going to read that. I'm going
6 to use the PowerPoint to try to walk through the issues and
7 to guide this conversation a little bit.

8 As the Chairman noted, I mean, there's really two
9 important components to this legislation. One is the fee
10 increase. We'll talk about that. But importantly and for
11 the first time, some modernization with it. So it allows
12 both for access to online sales for the dog owners, but it
13 also allows us to do a much better job, we feel, just in how
14 we manage that data file and access to it and particularly
15 in response to first responders and local law enforcement
16 and our wardens. We'll talk about that today.

17 So just to cut to the chase on this. You can see
18 the issue that's confronting us. We lay out in some detail
19 here, you know, the fiscal year declining fund balance.
20 You'll notice we will not leave the fiscal year we're
21 presently in without going negative and without some action.
22 All of next fiscal year will be negative. So we'll talk a
23 little bit more about that.

24 Also important to note, for the last couple of
25 years, the General Government Operating Fund for the

1 Department has supported the Bureau of Dog Law, but we
2 simply can't continue. This \$1.2 million this year -- and
3 we've all been in those conversations, protracted
4 conversations, about how you fund the work of this
5 government. We just don't feel that we can continue to put
6 the \$1.2 million into the Bureau of Dog Law, again,
7 underscoring the need for some action.

8 There's a couple of reasons for this. One, back
9 in 2009, there was a transfer out of the Dog Law Fund of \$4
10 million. And ever since that time, it's been difficult to
11 maintain financial stability in the Bureau.

12 Two, continue to see an escalation of operating
13 costs of the Bureau. And three, one of those hidden points
14 is that we continue to see the increase in the shift to
15 lifetime licenses and away from the annual licenses and the
16 long-term implications of that. If you buy a lifetime
17 license, it's equivalent to about five years of an annual
18 license. Obviously, the life expectancy of dogs are much
19 longer. So a smart decision for the dog owner but it comes
20 at a financial expense here for the Department.

21 The urgent part is that these now converge in
22 2017-'18. As the slide notes in the PowerPoint, you'll note
23 that it could be as soon as November of this year. If the
24 Fund goes negative, we have a little control over that just
25 to say that that's part of the billing system within the

1 Department of Ag. But regardless of what month you take it,
2 you can't end the year without going negative. So that is a
3 key consideration.

4 The next slide, just to note, as I said earlier,
5 all of next year is negative without some change in the fee
6 structure. We've avoided seeking the increase for several
7 years. I don't think there's anything hidden that this Fund
8 was challenged over the last couple of years. We really
9 wanted to do a couple of things.

10 One, to bring our Dog Law Advisory Board back
11 together. We relaunched that with a new set of Dog Law
12 Advisory Board members. We wanted to gain that experience
13 of the Board as the Legislature envisioned the Advisory
14 Board being used. We wanted to make sure that we were
15 cutting the costs where they could be cut. And we also
16 wanted to make sure that we were generating the revenue by
17 way of sales that we could. But we can't wait any longer.
18 We're really at a moment where we have to have some action
19 on a fee increase in 1463.

20 Even with the increased revenues and the
21 cost-cutting, you'll note just a couple of things that we
22 have done since 2012. The Department worked to increase
23 their revenue through sales of dog licenses. There's been a
24 14 percent increase from 2012 to 2016. That's 120,000 more
25 licenses sold, 12 percent more revenue generated through

1 those sales, about \$650,000. Interesting, of the increase,
2 54 percent came from lifetime licenses, to demonstrate the
3 point earlier that that's where the dog owners are going.

4 We've reduced expenses on this slide, as you'll
5 note, 486,000. We were looking hard at our expenses, where
6 could you save money. We went to an on-demand printing
7 versus a front printing and distribution. We've eliminated
8 reimbursements to about 50 shelters in Pennsylvania.

9 I've heard from some of the members of the
10 Committee about that. That's a direct result of just not
11 having money to continue to do the direct support for
12 shelters.

13 We've leased vehicles versus purchasing. We've
14 reduced the complement in the Bureau from 92 positions to 62
15 positions. Over that time, that saved us \$650,000 as well.

16 And as the next slide notes -- a little hard to
17 see here, but we put this in just to demonstrate that a
18 third of the wardens in Pennsylvania are covering two
19 counties or more. So in the original model it was designed
20 to have a warden for every county. We simply can't afford
21 that.

22 Our financial projections in the actual budget
23 point to some very difficult decisions. We risk, I think,
24 undermining the good work that was done in 2008 to protect
25 dogs and commercial kennels as one concern. And that will

1 be part of the difficult decision because potentially we end
2 up losing ground there.

3 We risk having fewer wardens in the state. The
4 dangerous dogs is one of those issues. 520 dangerous dogs
5 in Pennsylvania last year. We risk protecting the stray
6 dogs. Last year we had 5,000 -- over 5,000 stray dogs. The
7 Department was responsible for our wardens and returning
8 those dogs, of course, to the rightful owner.

9 Responding to dog bites would be at risk here as
10 well. 955 dog bites last year. These are investigations
11 that have been closed or are still continuing. And just a
12 note of interest, that the Insurance Information Institute
13 and the State Farm Insurance actually ranked Pennsylvania
14 fourth in the nation for dog bite cases. So there is a
15 correlation here with amount of work and concern, of course,
16 for the need for licensing and, noted earlier, just the
17 potential for fewer kennel inspections as well.

18 All of these bad things can be averted with House
19 Bill 1463 and the fee increase that we are seeking. To
20 return the restricted Fund to solvency will require an
21 increase in the price of a dog license. And as noted on
22 this slide and in your packet, this will be the first
23 increase in a fee, license fee, in 21 years for the Dog Law
24 Fund.

25 The proposal, to note here in the current column,

1 just look at the top line. The neutered male/female is at
2 \$6.50. That will go to \$10 under the proposal. I'll also
3 draw your attention to the Treasurer component of this.
4 Under the current program, the Treasurers receive \$1.50 of
5 each of those licenses sold. Under the proposal, that could
6 go to \$2.

7 Far right column, just for orientation, the
8 inflation-adjusted increase there -- you can see each of
9 these categories -- for some, it's slightly over and others
10 it's under. But to demonstrate the point that you're really
11 talking about, a fee that is commensurate with the last 21
12 years of inflation. We try to take that into account here
13 and be reasonable about it as well.

14 The next slide, these fees are comparable in the
15 work of the Dog Law Advisory Board. They did look around
16 the State of Pennsylvania at other dog licensing fees for
17 those jurisdictions that are independent of the State. As
18 an example, you'll see Pennsylvania at \$6.50. Here in
19 Harrisburg at \$12. Scranton is \$35 for an annual license.
20 Altoona, while shown here for the annual fee of \$9, their
21 lifetime license is \$54, as an example.

22 House Bill 1463 reflects the work, as I
23 mentioned, of the Dog Law Advisory Board, which really
24 included a lot of good thinkers to include Janis Creason,
25 the Dauphin County Treasurer, who you'll hear from soon, as

1 well as Mary Withrow, who will be testifying. Both of those
2 had great, very constructive insight to dog law generally
3 and certainly how we approach this dilemma of the Fund.

4 We'll also add convenience and efficiencies. We
5 looked at this hard because it wasn't simply about
6 satisfying a Department need but looking at the
7 stakeholders. And the stakeholders, of course, being the
8 public, No. 1. Secondly, the Department because of the
9 responsibilities, but also our Treasurers in each of the
10 counties, who are the partners for sales of and management
11 of this program.

12 The wardens and local law enforcement personnel
13 will be able to place a licensed dog, we feel, back to their
14 rightful owner quicker because of the access to the database
15 that would be developed. We spend a lot of time, as they
16 do, once you pick up a stray. Then you've got to do
17 something with it. You've got to manage that piece.

18 So we get the calls continuously from local law
19 enforcement who picked up dogs. What do you do with them?
20 That also is tied to the shelter point that I made earlier.
21 But just know that there's a lot of time spent.

22 Important here in this modernization is the
23 opportunity to purchase online. We have counties that
24 operate an online system but we have never had online
25 capability at the Commonwealth level. And that's one of the

1 changes we're seeking here as well. We can talk more about
2 that and sort of how it would function.

3 You will be able to, from the convenience of
4 home, go online, purchase it, tag your county. The county
5 is notified. The license will be received. That whole
6 transaction will be seamless from the purchaser's
7 perspective. It will be like shopping on Amazon, right?
8 All that transaction stuff will be worked out. But we've
9 never had that capability. And there's implications.

10 Presently, as noted, we've got a very fragmented
11 system. So 1463 allows the Commonwealth to create this
12 single online platform, as the Chairman noted in opening
13 statements. It does generate a single statewide database
14 with that, just not the platform and access. Just being
15 able to manage the data will certainly aid enforcement.

16 And as I often say on the renewal side -- I mean,
17 I don't know about you, but I need a prompt sometimes,
18 renewal to get my car inspected, right, to go to the
19 dentist, to take the kids to, you know, the after-school
20 program, whatever. We have no capability today to actually
21 notify you as a license holder that your renewal is
22 expiring. And that will be one of the real important
23 functions here, that we can actually send you that note. We
24 think that's going to be beneficial both from a service
25 standpoint but help us on the sales side as well.

1 This proposal will raise an additional 2.8
2 million. So on this slide -- sorry, Jon. Back up one. So
3 you'll see the highlighted area here. If you look at the
4 '17-'18 year, fiscal year, that would be an additional \$2.8
5 million raised with this fee increase.

6 Again, the fee structure is laid out. But the
7 moving from \$6.50 to \$10 on those and the other non-kennel
8 related fees would generate \$2.8 million. This would keep
9 the Fund solvent through 2021.

10 As you'll note in 1463 and my testimony, this
11 bill also allows the Department of Agriculture to establish
12 by regulation a fee increase. Based on the need, of course,
13 that would all be done in consultation with you and the Dog
14 Law Advisory Board. So just to say that that is an
15 important provision for us -- and we have fought many times
16 about the current dilemma we're in -- we have no ability to
17 adjust those licensing fees absent the legislative change.
18 So going forward we're going to seek that in the legislation
19 with your assistance. So again, that will be done by
20 regulation as well.

21 On the modernization side, just to note sort of
22 what's at risk here, you'll see that the shelter
23 reimbursements for holding stray dogs, we eliminated the
24 direct grants. But any further sort of reimbursement for
25 that service we do provide on a per-dog basis. Kristen can

1 talk more about that, if you'd like. That is also at risk
2 now without a fee increase.

3 The dangerous dog registry, you know, would be at
4 risk. You know, there's no -- potentially no registration
5 enforcement there. We can talk more about it. But a lot of
6 time is spent with those dangerous dogs and tracking them
7 within the Commonwealth and across state and county lines.
8 Personnel to do the kennel inspections.

9 One of the original intents of the legislation
10 back in 1893 when the Dog Law was created was this final
11 point about livestock damage. We don't spend a lot of time
12 talking about that but just to say that we still have today
13 losses due to dogs and coyotes. The Fund allows for
14 reimbursement of those costs. That would also be at risk
15 here as well.

16 And just to wrap up, this proposal provides
17 long-term solvency to the Fund. The initial fee increase,
18 as I noted, would take effect and would carry the Fund
19 through 2021. It would relieve our general government
20 operating by about 1.25 million. And you'll see in some
21 years that has been a direct contribution to the Bureau.
22 Other times it has been a forgiveness, if you will, of the
23 administrative cost to operate that Bureau within the
24 administrative structure when we could afford it, right?

25 And again, the GGO, given where we are today, and

1 the difficulty of filling positions, but this would be a
2 benefit to that. It restores the grants that we make to
3 shelters. I say 50. I know that has been as high as 70
4 shelters across the state that we could reestablish those
5 grants. It provides for a uniform platform both for
6 management of the statewide database as well as the sales
7 portal as well.

8 I look forward to the conversation this morning.
9 I just want to say thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the
10 opportunity to be here. We appreciate Representative
11 Pashinski's sponsorship and Senator Schwank. Important
12 conversation and one of those functions that has been with
13 the Department for over 100 years that we're concerned
14 about. We think it's incredibly important. There is an
15 accountability provision to this for those who own the dogs
16 who just believe that the special Fund should cover the
17 special services provided to those who own the dogs versus
18 our general government operating as it does today in part.

19 With that, thank you.

20 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you, Mr.
21 Secretary. Thank you for the information.

22 You know, the first thing that comes to mind is
23 certainly cost increases over time. It has been a while
24 since there's been an increase. But looking at your
25 testimony, you're advocating for an increase but at the same

1 time wanting to provide more revenue for the County
2 Treasurers and also more revenue to be able to give out
3 grants to other agencies.

4 And one line in your testimony under the County
5 Treasurer section says, we hope to help counties turn the
6 dog licensing function of County Treasurers from a cost
7 center to a profit center. I'm not sure that we're looking
8 to turn the Treasurer's operation into a profit center. I
9 mean, they're providing a service. They should be
10 compensated for the work that they provide with that
11 service.

12 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: But I look at it from
14 a perspective of covering costs rather than creating a
15 surplus to be able to increase costs. I certainly would
16 welcome any comment that you have on that.

17 And associated with that, it seems as though when
18 looking at all the information here that a lot of dog
19 officers' time is consumed with inspecting kennels. So it
20 looks like when you look at the cost of a kennel license --
21 I know the lowest category is \$25 -- it seems like dog
22 license fees are supplementing going out and inspecting
23 kennels.

24 So is there a similar proposal to increase kennel
25 fees to try to cover some of that cost?

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Right. So thank you
2 for the question. Good question on the first part about the
3 Treasurers. You know, we stated that in the testimony to
4 sort of point out that at this time we have County
5 Treasurers who their cost of on-line systems can be as much
6 as \$10,000. That's a cost to the Treasurer and local
7 government that we feel with the on-line system would help
8 alleviate.

9 Two is we do count on the Treasurers to help
10 market. And at this point, that's been one of the
11 challenges of getting the word out and having a really
12 proactive stance. It's not just for the Bureau and what we
13 do, but having our County Treasurers lead agents within
14 those jurisdictions helps us, you know, advertise and sell
15 licenses.

16 So that's the profit center component of that.
17 Right now there's a loss in some counties. That shouldn't
18 be a loss of the service. So we're trying to accommodate
19 that with a slight increase from \$1.50 to \$2 on what they
20 would receive out of the license, annual license, but also
21 make the on-line system available to them at no cost.

22 On the second point, again, we contemplated what
23 to do with the total fee structure within the program and
24 whether, you know, to seek an increase on the kennels.
25 Kristen can share sort of the allocation of time that the

1 wardens spend. But we feel like 87 percent of the fees that
2 it takes to operate the Bureau come from the annual sales.

3 That would be most important to really secure
4 some stability on the annual license fee. That's not to say
5 that the other individual kennel fees, license fees,
6 couldn't be considered. That's certainly a possibility.

7 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

8 Chairman Pashinski.

9 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Thank you very
10 much, Mr. Secretary. Good to see you again.

11 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Good to see you.

12 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: There's a couple
13 points I want to make. Number 1, you've been subsidizing
14 this operation at a tune of about \$1.2 million a year. Is
15 that correct?

16 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: That's correct.

17 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Okay. I just want
18 to share with everyone that I was just approached by my
19 local SPCA to support a municipal agreement. The SPCAs
20 don't have enough money to be able to take care of all the
21 stray dogs that they are collecting. So they are going out
22 to all of the communities from my local area and requesting
23 a fee. It's going to be \$100 per dog that they collect.

24 If this were to be instituted, you could then
25 restore that \$600,000 and therefore, most likely, eliminate

1 any potential for the locals having to reach out to the
2 communities. So it seems as though it's sort of top down.
3 If we fund this thing appropriately, you have enough money
4 to operate. You have enough money to help the counties
5 operate at a level where it is not a loss. You're able to
6 then subsidize some of the local SPCAs, which then
7 eliminates a need from the local folks of paying a fee.

8 Am I on the right track?

9 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah, you're on the
10 right track. It would certainly be -- assuming several
11 things. One, that those local SPCAs are also designated
12 shelters, right. So in your relationship, it's the
13 designated shelter versus the actual organization. But it
14 would certainly, you know, limit that request to the local
15 to make a local appeal.

16 It's important to note in this system -- I
17 mentioned the 5,000 dogs that are strays. So when we take
18 possession of that dog, the 5,000, we have to find either
19 the owner or you find a participating shelter. They can't
20 stay in the back of the truck. You've got to do something
21 with them.

22 And that's important because it's predicated then
23 on our agreements with the local shelters to actually take a
24 dog, that they can hold it until the rightful owner is
25 found. So that's the relationship when we talk about, you

1 know, why those local grants are so important. We feel that
2 there's an infrastructure there.

3 Right now we only provide sort of a minimal, you
4 know, reimbursement to them to help. The grants sort of
5 help us build the capacity within the system to make that
6 larger system work by supporting local shelters.

7 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: And then could you
8 just, you know, take this a little further relative to the
9 number of dog bites? We're fourth in the nation. The cost
10 involved in that. You've gone from 92 to 62 employees. Has
11 that had any relationship relative to the cost of the dog
12 bites and the insurance obligations and so on?

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: There's not a direct
14 line correlation between them. I think that what we have
15 seen with the limited staff and reducing the complement is
16 that you've got a geography problem. How do you cover -- we
17 all live in areas and how difficult it is to navigate some
18 areas of the State. So we have wardens that have got to
19 cover a larger territory.

20 I think if there is a challenge, it is on the use
21 of the warden's time for responses to, you know, the strays,
22 certainly responding to the dangerous dogs, but it also
23 shows up in the ability to do the canvassing and sales of
24 licenses. But that's certainly part of the list of the
25 things that wardens have to do.

1 Kristen, do you want to add something?

2 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: I was just going to
3 say that we looked based on 2016 numbers. And
4 three-quarters of our time is actually spent handling
5 complaints from the public, via dog bites, damages caused by
6 dogs to livestock, the dog that is running down the street,
7 picking up a stray dog and finding a shelter to transport
8 it.

9 There are several counties in the State that do
10 not have a local shelter willing to accept strays. At that
11 point, we then have to start calling neighboring counties to
12 find out if that shelter would be willing to accept a stray
13 and then make arrangements to get that dog there.

14 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: And staying with
15 that once again, the whole purpose of a dog law was
16 protection of the citizens, you know, and livestock and so
17 on. So, you know, the need is obviously there. Too often
18 we forget about it because maybe you're not approached by,
19 you know, a stray dog that might be vicious.

20 And one last concern that I have -- Mr. Church,
21 if that's okay?

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Yes.

23 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: We have the Dog Law
24 Advisory Board. There's been some concern about providing
25 you with the sole authority to increase fees. Would there

1 be any process that you'd be amenable to where the Dog Law
2 Advisory Board might play a role in that discussion?

3 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. They should be
4 intimately involved in that conversation. I mean, they
5 helped us design what you see in 1463 in terms of the cost
6 through comparative analysis to look at the forecasting of
7 the next 20 years. I mean, the expectation would be they
8 would be. If we need to formalize that through the
9 legislation, we should do that.

10 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Okay. I appreciate
11 that. Thank you very much.

12 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

13 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: A question came to
16 mind that I wanted to ask. You know, we've talked a lot
17 about dangerous dogs and that that's important to this
18 discussion. And your testimony says that you'll be better
19 able to monitor the registry. What exactly does that mean?
20 And, you know, what exactly do you do in dog bite cases
21 other than monitor where these dangerous dogs are? What is
22 the role? How will this enable you to do a better job with
23 what you do?

24 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Kristen, do you want
25 to walk through? It's probably important to outline some of

1 what we do presently and then with the change what's
2 enhanced by the on-line system.

3 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Sure.

4 So once a dog is --

5 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Can you pull the
6 microphone closer?

7 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Sorry.

8 Once a dog is deemed dangerous by a Magisterial
9 District Judge, that Judge then sends our agency a
10 notification of the dog being determined dangerous. That
11 prompts our wardens to go out and serve the dog owner with a
12 registration packet.

13 From there we track 30 days. They have 30 days
14 to register the dog. So having the dog microchipped,
15 ensuring it's been neutered. There's a \$500 annual
16 registration fee, a \$50,000 insurance policy that needs to
17 be obtained. They have big yellow warning signs that they
18 have to post.

19 Then our wardens go out, do an inspection. We
20 ensure that the dog -- if it's not kept in the house,
21 there's requirements for the type of enclosure that that dog
22 has to be kept in outside. The cage has to have a solid
23 top. It has to have a connected bottom embedded in the
24 ground two feet deep. So the wardens go out and inspect
25 twice a year to ensure compliance with that. If the dog is

1 out, if the dog owner is taking the dog to the vet, it has
2 to be muzzled at all times, anytime it's outside of its
3 enclosure.

4 And for us, we receive a lot of complaints from
5 the neighbors or maybe the victim saying the dog owner has
6 the dog out and it's not muzzled or the dog is running
7 loose. So we continuously monitor that.

8 Every year we're making sure that their policies
9 didn't lapse or that they're paying their \$500 annual
10 registration fee. When that doesn't happen, that prompts
11 our office to have to take next-level steps, meaning filing
12 misdemeanor-level charges to try to gain our compliance.

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: And the second part
14 of that question, Kristen, what can we do to do a better job
15 of monitoring those dangerous dogs? What's enhanced by the
16 new system?

17 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: The enhancement
18 really is just continuing to allow us to have the resources
19 to go out and continue to provide those services.

20 Oftentimes the victims in these cases don't
21 understand why we cannot just take the dog right away. It
22 just allows us to continue responding to the public.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: How many dangerous
24 dogs are there registered?

25 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Registered currently

1 there's about 192. That number changes quite often.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: 192 in the
3 Commonwealth?

4 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Yeah.

5 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Just in the areas that
6 you serve because in the cities -- are you going into the
7 cities that have their own dog licensing to monitor
8 dangerous dogs?

9 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: There are six cities
10 in the State that we do not have any authority in. And
11 that's Altoona, Erie, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Scranton, and
12 Philadelphia. In those counties, while we don't actually go
13 into these areas and monitor the dangerous dogs, we do make
14 sure that those dogs are listed on our registry. And we
15 work with the city officials to ensure we get that
16 information.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: So you don't do
18 anything with those dangerous dogs so you would say there's
19 no cost associated with that?

20 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: No.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: But you are saying
22 there's significant cost in the rest of the Commonwealth to
23 be able to monitor those dogs. Would you say that's a
24 significant amount of time for your officers?

25 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Yes.

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: You point to a
2 problem, right, where we have this dangerous dog registry.
3 If you have local jurisdiction of the Dog Law, we try to
4 include those. But to be very honest about it, the
5 reporting back to the Department -- and we have no primary
6 jurisdiction -- is that there are issues there in terms of
7 what list and, you know, how current that list is.

8 Two is when you get folks moving, right. So you
9 move these jurisdictions. It becomes difficult to track
10 those dangerous dogs without having the statewide system and
11 you have those gaps in jurisdiction.

12 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And obviously the
13 police have the jurisdiction also. I know they're
14 overtasked in many areas.

15 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: They have the
16 jurisdiction to file the charges but not actually the
17 registration. That would be solely on the Department.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay.

19 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: And just to clarify,
20 too, sometimes it takes a lot of our time if a dog is deemed
21 dangerous and we can't get the registration packet served
22 right away. An individual may say, I transferred the dog to
23 my neighbor. It can be time-consuming for us to try to
24 track down where this dog actually is located.

25 And we do take it seriously because it's a public

1 safety concern for us.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay. Thank you.

3 Representative Diamond.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DIAMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your testimony.

6 I certainly understand your costs-versus-duties
7 argument. Let me just comment that it's not hard to
8 understand that the reason there hasn't been an increase is
9 because it requires legislative oversight and that becomes a
10 political decision.

11 On the other hand, I know with a number of other
12 departments it's been considered giving those departments
13 autonomy in setting fees.

14 And the feedback I get back home is, if the
15 Executive Branch then has autonomy in setting fees, for lack
16 of a better way to put it, they want somebody to fire when
17 they think the fees are too high. So I think we have to
18 balance out. I mean, we're easier to fire than bureaucrats
19 in the Executive Branch and that sort of thing.

20 My real question, though, is, with the on-line
21 system that you envision here and that's envisioned by HB
22 1463, how do I get my tag? I don't have a metal printer on
23 my computer. You know, is this something that -- are the
24 County Treasurers still going to handle that? Do I have to
25 take a form to them?

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. So you'll be
2 able to purchase online. You choose your county. You fill
3 out the registration form. The County issues tag.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DIAMOND: Okay.

5 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It will still come
6 from the County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DIAMOND: Okay.

8 REPRESENTATIVE MINDY FEE: Can I -- sorry, Martin
9 -- Chairman. I just want to follow up on that quickly.

10 I need to explain -- why are they County? I
11 mean, if it's State run, why can't you, as the Bureau, just
12 issue those different tags? Wouldn't that save a lot of
13 money?

14 Sorry, Treasurer.

15 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Do you have time for
16 another hearing?

17 Well, it's interesting. There's always been this
18 formal partnership with the issuance of licenses by local
19 entity. And I think that is a product of, you know, the
20 need. And prior to any technology, right, you're walking
21 into the courthouse. You walk into the local Treasurer's
22 office to, you know, put your dollar down or whatever it was
23 at the time and get a hard tag. Technology has now changed
24 this.

25 That said, we still think there's value of the

1 local presence of the Treasurer in knowing locally where
2 that dog is and that relationship because we still depend on
3 the local law enforcement, the local veterinarians, the
4 local community. So that's the piece.

5 If you were to simply redesign this and this was
6 the first discussion about licensing dogs, you would be able
7 to just have it be a State registry, State system, State
8 issued, right. But you wouldn't have any of that local
9 infrastructure then to protect, we think, on the back side,
10 really add to the value quite honestly, and the protection
11 of the public.

12 REPRESENTATIVE FEE: Well, I guess that would be
13 the whole point of modernization because then they could
14 also tap into the service to see where the dogs are, I would
15 think.

16 Thank you.

17 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Probably the same
19 reason County Treasurers are still issuing antlerless deer
20 license tags. Little bit of politics involved.

21 Representative DeLissio.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24 Good morning, Mr. Secretary.

25 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Good morning.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: At risk for elimination
2 was the protection of livestock or, you know, reimbursement
3 for livestock under dogs and coyotes. As a business
4 concept, you have assets. Your assets are usually insured.

5 So is livestock not an insured asset? How does
6 that work? If this is an insured asset, is the insurance
7 like the first payer and the Department of Ag is subsequent?
8 Does this incentivize some agricultural organizations not to
9 carry insurance because they know Ag is a default? How does
10 that work?

11 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Kristen.

12 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Yes. If the animals
13 are insured, then we would deny the claim. That's grounds
14 for us to deny a claim. It's the uninsured animals that we
15 would then reimburse for up to 90 percent of market value.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: And do we see a lot of
17 non-insured because folks are using this as a default? Is
18 there any type of deduction? Even under an insurance
19 policy, there's at least a deductible so the owner of the
20 policy, if you will, has some responsibility toward, you
21 know, making themselves whole. Is there a like situation
22 with Ag?

23 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: We see specifically a
24 lot of sheep, chicken, damage claims.

25 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Okay.

1 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Average about \$30,000
2 in reimbursement for damage claims annually, per claim,
3 total for all claims. Average for all claims is about
4 \$30,000.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Total for all claims.
6 Okay.

7 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: And we also do
8 damages caused by coyotes as well. We make it our first
9 priority to seek out the dog owner if it's dog-caused
10 damages because then you get into filing dangerous dog
11 charges. The owner would then be responsible for
12 reimbursing the farmer for any damages to the livestock.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: So if 30,000 is the
14 statewide total, what does an average claim look like in
15 terms of dollars? Do you know off the top of your head?

16 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: It depends. It could
17 be anywhere from a couple hundred for chickens. We had a
18 deer damage claim several years ago that ended up being
19 negotiated down to \$32,000. When those claims happen, we
20 have to actually get certified livestock appraisers
21 involved. It becomes quite a process. We get into
22 litigation issues over it.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Is it worth the
24 infrastructure to maintain this process, to continue this if
25 indeed it's a total of, you know, 30,000 because the process

1 that -- the bureaucracy that has to be in place in order to
2 respond to that may cost more than \$30,000. We're trying to
3 be efficient.

4 And in this day and age, if there is -- I would
5 imagine if there wasn't insurance and there weren't other
6 resorts, but you really have to question whether or not this
7 is even a necessary function of government. As the
8 Representative from Lancaster County said, things move
9 forward, modernization. And is this that opportunity to
10 take a hard look at whether we should be doing this at all
11 at this point?

12 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It's a fair question.
13 I mean, it goes back to why in 1893 the Dog Law was
14 established to begin with. Right. It has its roots in
15 history.

16 Having been on the receiving end of the calls and
17 concerns about, you know, dogs that have gotten in someone's
18 poultry or sheep, I mean, they're difficult because they are
19 assets. But sometimes, you know, the coverage and levels
20 and stuff. It was one of the original premises of a dog law
21 and why we have it and why we license dogs today, not that
22 we've seen a huge increase, you know, in the losses and/or
23 payouts but we can certainly consider whether that's still
24 relevant or not.

25 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Thank you.

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

3 Representative Madden.

4 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Thank you, Secretary Redding, for your testimony.

6 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Good morning.

7 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Last week I toured AWSOM,
8 which stands for Animal Welfare Shelter of Monroe County.
9 And they stepped in many years ago when our local SPCA
10 picked up and left.

11 I was amazed at how much work their no-kill
12 shelter -- if a dog takes five, six years, or never gets
13 adopted, they live there quite happily. And I'm amazed at
14 the amount of work and cost that it takes to run one of
15 those shelters.

16 I brought a 40-pound bag of dog food with me and
17 asked how long this would last. They said about a half a
18 day. So I'm certainly thrilled that you'll be restoring
19 annual grants to shelters.

20 My question is, with the recent passing of
21 Libre's Law, one of the consequences of being found guilty
22 of animal cruelty is the surrender of the dog. Do you have
23 any numbers? Do you anticipate how many dogs will be
24 surrendered and will be put into shelters? What possible
25 expense will that add to it? Does this raise enough to

1 compensate for what could be a growing number of dogs being
2 surrendered?

3 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: That's a great
4 question. I don't know if we've looked at when those dogs
5 are relinquished, how many, and the terms of relinquishment.

6 Kristen, I don't know if you've looked at that at
7 all.

8 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: We haven't.

9 Actually, in those situations, it would not be
10 the Department doing any reimbursement for those dogs.
11 There's, I believe, a section that the agency who is getting
12 those dogs, that seize those dogs, and that they are now
13 being forfeited them, that they can recover those funds from
14 the dog owner.

15 But for us, the impact that we've seen to date
16 with Libre's Law is just fielding questions from the public.
17 We've been working hand in hand with the Humane Society of
18 the United States, with the Pennsylvania SPCA, and with our
19 State Police just ensuring that we're all on the same page
20 and referring people to the right places.

21 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: I guess a point of
22 clarification would be, certainly on the per-dog basis,
23 there wouldn't be additional dollars for that dog
24 specifically under Libre. But the actual shelter, AWSOM, as
25 a shelter, could be one of the designated shelters receiving

1 grants. But that's a base grant. That's not on a per-dog
2 basis.

3 I think your point is, what happens with those
4 dogs when they find themselves in there and how is that
5 managed financially? That's a great question.

6 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Okay. Thank you.

7 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative
9 Zimmerman.

10 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Thank you, Mr.
11 Chairman.

12 Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your testimony.

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It's good to see you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Question. Do we --
15 and I'm late. I apologize. Maybe my question has been
16 answered. Do we know how many dogs are in Pennsylvania?

17 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: We have an estimate
18 of about 2.3 million.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: And what percent of
20 those are actually licensed?

21 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: 55 percent.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: 55. And what's
23 actually being done to license what's not licensed?

24 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: That is an everyday
25 hustle. And that goes back to this local point of trying to

1 reach out, do the canvassing. We do the notices. We send
2 -- you know, you try to engage. But this is where this gap
3 exists of either being able to notify those renewals but how
4 do you bring folks that haven't historically been in the
5 system into the system?

6 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Right.

7 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It really is about
8 direct contact. We rely on offices. Your office is to help
9 sort of spread that word. We work with the veterinarians to
10 help do that. We try to get the local law enforcement. But
11 at the end of the day, it's a personal responsibility and
12 accountability that comes into play here.

13 But we struggle with that. That's the bottom
14 line.

15 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Because it seems like
16 that would be considerable dollars if the remaining dogs
17 would actually be licensed.

18 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. If you could
19 get all 2.3 million dogs licensed, we wouldn't need a fee
20 increase. Right. Historically we've been in that 50, you
21 know, 60 percent of total dogs.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Okay. Thank you.

23 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE ZIMMERMAN: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chairman.

1 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative Moul.

2 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Good to see you again, Mr. Secretary.

4 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Thank you, neighbor.

5 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Just one thought and then
6 two quick questions.

7 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

8 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: I'm looking at the bill and
9 it says the license fee increase goes from 7 to 11 dollars.
10 To you and I, that's 4 bucks, who cares. But in the media,
11 that's going to play out as a 40 percent increase. What do
12 you think the backlash to that will be?

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Well, I think the --
14 again, some context here. I mean, over 21 years. Right. I
15 think you have to say, listen, it's been 21 years since
16 we've actually increased it. You know, you can't --

17 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: I get it. You get it.
18 It's going to be an educational issue to make sure people
19 understand it's the first time.

20 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: I understand.

21 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: I mean, when it came up to
22 the fuel tax, the biggest part of that was to educate people
23 as to how long it was since we had done anything.

24 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

25 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Maybe in the future we

1 address this more often so we don't have to have such big
2 jumps.

3 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: If I could add. I
4 think the other piece for us is going to be the convenience.
5 It's the one thing we hear over and over and over is that --
6 I've got to go. You have online systems locally. But
7 that's such a patchwork across the State. I think that
8 convenience piece will be worth something. How do you sort
9 of justify it? I get it.

10 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Right. I'm just trying to
11 get the fires out before they get roaring.

12 You mentioned that your lifetime dog licenses
13 actually wind up being losers for you because dogs are
14 living longer now. So why continue to offer them? Not
15 saying cancel the ones that are out there but why continue
16 to offer them going forward if they're actually winding up
17 losing you money in the long rung?

18 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. So there's two
19 approaches. The one we've taken is increase the fee. I
20 mean, so have it be a little more commensurate with -- right
21 now it's five annual licenses to equal one lifetime. So you
22 see the number. I don't know if it's going to be, you know,
23 the life of the dog, you know, times the annual fee.

24 So our approach has been to sort of -- if the dog
25 owners like it, don't take it away but have it be more

1 commensurate with the cost and convenience.

2 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Okay. And one last really
3 quick question because I must run to a voting meeting.

4 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

5 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: You mentioned in your
6 opening that, if I heard this correctly, there was \$4
7 million transferred out of the Dog Law Fund years ago?

8 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah, in 2009.

9 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: In 2009. Where did it go?

10 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Went to the General
11 Fund.

12 REPRESENTATIVE MOUL: Oh, that's bad on our part,
13 I guess. Okay. Thank you.

14 (Laughter)

15 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We'll stop that
16 questioning right there.

17 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Thanks for asking.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Governor Rendell
19 didn't think it was bad.

20 Representative Kavulich.

21 REPRESENTATIVE KAVULICH: Thank you, Mr.
22 Chairman.

23 Ironically, Mr. Secretary, that's where my
24 statement or line of questioning goes.

25 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

1 REPRESENTATIVE KAVULICH: I know this has been an
2 issue, not only with yourself but with the previous
3 Secretary with the Dog Law Fund and slowly reducing funds
4 and the amount of money you have in there. Then the
5 Chairman talked a little bit about surplus earlier before.

6 How do we avoid being back in the same situation
7 in four to six years because of what Representative Moul
8 just said where the Legislature is hitting that Dog Fund
9 again to transfer it into the General Fund, which we have a
10 habit of doing here in this building.

11 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Well, I would say
12 again the significant change here is that we can increase
13 fees by regulation. I think that's important. Right.
14 Certainly having to come back every 21 years and ask for the
15 Legislature's consideration of that even with, you know, the
16 costs that we've seen escalate.

17 It's not a fail-safe measure. But I think
18 knowing that you're venturing into this thing, listen, if we
19 do that, there's going to be a need to go out and raise the
20 fee. We'll have to do that by a regulation versus coming
21 back.

22 But I don't know how you stop that. But it is
23 something that happened. And not that this fund would have
24 been self-sustaining for, you know, eternity. Eventually we
25 would have run into this negative. It just would have been

1 a couple years from now.

2 REPRESENTATIVE KAVULICH: But it seems to me you
3 have to be careful that you don't get that surplus again
4 because then you're in danger of having to do this all over
5 again and come back here again looking for some way to
6 replenish that fund.

7 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes. Absolutely.

8 REPRESENTATIVE KAVULICH: Thank you.

9 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative Rabb.

11 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 Hello, Mr. Secretary. Good to see you again.

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Good to see you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: We met the first time I
15 touched a cow. That was a pretty momentous occasion for me.

16 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: I remember that.

17 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Yes. I'm still processing
18 that experience.

19 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Okay.

20 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: I'm in one of those six
21 bubbles that handle their own dog licenses. And I was
22 shocked to hear that the registry has only 192, in this
23 moment anyway, of dangerous canines. Is that the right
24 number presently for the Commonwealth?

25 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: For registered.

1 That's not all the ones that are on the list. Of the 520,
2 there's 192 that are actually registered.

3 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: I see. Okay.

4 So within the subsets of registered dogs, the bad
5 ones, that's the 192. Is that inclusive of the six bubbles?

6 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: It does. We actually
7 -- I'm sorry. It does include that. There are some in
8 Philadelphia. Several years ago we drove down there and met
9 with officials to find a way to work with them to get to the
10 point where we were being notified and at the very minimal
11 have those dogs listed on the registry for the individuals
12 living in that area.

13 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Okay. I was just shocked
14 at how low that number is in light of how many dogs are in
15 Philadelphia alone and how many dogs I've seen personally in
16 my district alone that are ravenous.

17 I'm curious. Is there a process of greater
18 accountability by the entities in these six bubbles to the
19 Department of Agriculture? It seems like there's generally
20 a collaborative spirit that occurs as a win-win on some
21 level. But is there anything that could provide a greater
22 sense of accountability to what you're doing on the state
23 level so that these numbers can be more reflective of the
24 reality and also provide resources without increasing
25 bureaucracy? Does that make sense?

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It does. We're
2 comfortable with the number that we have on the list. But
3 we don't believe that that is 100 percent. That's part of
4 your challenge. There are dangerous dogs there. We've
5 really worked hard to get that collaborative effort. But
6 currently, you know, it really is -- it's more by
7 cooperation than it is by mandate that those bubbles, as you
8 term, have a responsibility to notify the Department of a
9 dangerous dog.

10 So there's a gap here both in terms of the total
11 but also the process to get those on to the State list.
12 Importantly then that State list becomes available for local
13 law enforcement and local communities.

14 So to answer your question, I think in here we
15 can certainly tighten up the reporting requirements and be
16 more specific in terms of expectations. Once the dangerous
17 dog is identified, the reporting requirement to the State
18 for purposes of a statewide database can be tightened up.

19 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: And if I may?

20 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

21 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Just a quick followup.

22 Will these six municipalities' residents be able
23 to register on the State or do they have to continue to do
24 it through their representative municipalities?

25 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: They will have to

1 work through the local municipalities.

2 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: They will?

3 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

4 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: And is there any benefit of
5 figuring out a way to let them use your system prospectively
6 to decrease costs based on infrastructure, technological
7 infrastructure, and have that compliance built in where you
8 say, okay, you have an ease of use of the State system, you
9 still have your own municipal regs, what have you, but as a
10 consequence of making it more convenient for Philly
11 residents, for instance, you know, we need a little more
12 transparency or whatever the things would be to allow you to
13 have the information you need to make decisions across the
14 Commonwealth?

15 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah.

16 Kristen, if you could jump in. I would just say
17 that there's certainly a benefit. I don't think there's
18 anything that would preclude a system built, you know, to
19 recognize that there are local jurisdictions. I think the
20 greater challenge is on the back side of accounting.

21 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Sure.

22 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: So you would do the
23 online transaction. Then we have to take responsibility for
24 how to account for that and get the dollars back to the
25 local. But in a redesign of a system, it would certainly be

1 a benefit to having those bubbles in the system, right, both
2 for total dogs but also on the strays and particularly the
3 dangerous dogs.

4 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Thank you.

5 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative
7 Lawrence.

8 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr.
9 Chairman.

10 Mr. Secretary, always good to see you.

11 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Good to see you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: Is there any incentive
13 right now, just following up on Representative Zimmerman's
14 question, with regard to, you know, the number of dogs that
15 are eligible but not licensed? Anytime you're talking about
16 a dog law, there's obviously controversy.

17 But I guess my question is, is there any
18 incentive for veterinarians who see, I'm sure, a large
19 quantity of unlicensed dogs to encourage folks to register
20 them?

21 I mean, I would think that, for example, if an
22 unlicensed dog or unregistered dog comes in and maybe the
23 vet is cut in for whatever the county would get, it's
24 probably not a whole lot, but, you know, that might
25 encourage folks to sign up if, you know, they were coming

1 through anyway. Just a question.

2 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. And it's a
3 good question, one that we have looked at over time. It's
4 certainly a point of access, right, and a good place to have
5 that conversation about licensure.

6 It is not something that the veterinarians have
7 wanted mandated. We do have some that are agents or
8 subagents within counties. And they would prefer to have
9 that be an option for their business versus a mandate to do
10 it.

11 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: Thank you.

12 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Sure.

13 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our Executive
16 Director, Kerry Golden.

17 MS. KERRY GOLDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Mr. Secretary, actually I think this is probably
19 a question for Kristen. Back in 2013-'14 is when the grants
20 to the shelters that are commonly known as the Keep the
21 Lights On Program Grants were discontinued. But at the same
22 time the holding and disposing fees were increased from 25
23 to 40 dollars.

24 What is the current reimbursement for the holding
25 and disposing fees?

1 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: It is still \$40.

2 MS. KERRY GOLDEN: So shelters are still getting
3 funding to keep dogs that dog wardens bring to them?

4 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: Shelters do still get
5 paid \$40 per stray dog that they are holding for the minimum
6 48 hours as long as they are submitting that quarterly.

7 MS. KERRY GOLDEN: Thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Chairman Pashinski.

9 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Just one thing for
10 everyone to think about.

11 At the present time, you can't sell a puppy prior
12 to being two months old. And you can't license a dog prior
13 to three months old. Is there a decent consideration for
14 the idea of point of sale at the appropriate time? In other
15 words, massaging these numbers so that whenever that
16 particular puppy is sold, that's when you would initiate the
17 licensing process.

18 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: That's another one of
19 the gaps. Right. And that would be a way to help close
20 that a little bit.

21 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: So you're amenable
22 to that?

23 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

24 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: All right. So that
25 might be another option that we can all discuss.

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

2 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: Thank you, Mr.
3 Chairman.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

5 One last thought. We talked a lot about the
6 system that you want to set up, the on-line system. Do you
7 know what the cost would be to create a system of that
8 nature?

9 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: We don't know for
10 sure what it is. What we have -- we've looked at a couple
11 of systems. We've looked at the State of Ohio, who does
12 have an online system. We looked at a couple of online
13 systems even within the Commonwealth. The short answer is,
14 I can't give you a number, Mr. Chairman. I don't know for
15 sure.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay.

17 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: The conversation when
18 it started probably a year ago has evolved a little bit to
19 include some conversation about existing technology
20 infrastructure the Commonwealth has already bought and paid
21 for that can be borrowed for purposes of building the
22 system. And there's some belief that there's a significant
23 investment that's already been made.

24 I'll give you two examples both within the
25 Department of Agriculture. Our PA plants and one of our

1 animal health systems have the functionality that we're
2 looking for here. It doesn't have the county component.
3 But we think that we can, you know, work at using what we've
4 already invested in as a good base to build out the system.

5 There will be an RFP process that will go out and
6 get us a quote. We'll have some hard numbers to come back
7 with. In fact, we're drafting that right now just to sort
8 of keep this process moving.

9 As you see here on the calendar, I mean, we're
10 going to have to do something by the end of the year, end of
11 the fiscal year. We're going to get those numbers and we'll
12 be glad to share that with you.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: So you would envision
14 this as a system where anyone in the Commonwealth could log
15 on, buy a dog license, and pay for it online. The
16 Department of Agriculture would then send the information
17 back to the respective county to issue the dog license. And
18 the payment to the County Treasurer would be issued back to
19 the County Treasurer at that point?

20 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Correct.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And it would work the
22 same way if someone walked into the Treasurer's Office or
23 went to a local agent still to be able to get a license?

24 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. So it's
25 envisioned -- the first part of that, yes. If somebody buys

1 online, that transaction would be purchase date, a transfer
2 to the county to offer their 1.50 for that sale.

3 If there's a local transaction, one of the issues
4 that we have to resolve is there's a couple of commercial
5 systems available. And County Treasurers like those
6 commercial systems. If that's the case -- now, they still
7 have their own cost there. We would certainly prefer that
8 they use ours.

9 But there's going to be the requirement that they
10 provide certain data for inclusion in our data system under
11 a certain format, on a certain frequency. That would be
12 required.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: All right.

14 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: So you'll have the
15 same functionality at the State level. So it'll live true
16 to both the consumer access but also importantly the State
17 database access that we're really in search of here and not
18 the 47, 50 county variety.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And who would have
20 access to the information in this database?

21 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: So it would be the
22 Department of Agriculture. It would be local law
23 enforcement. It would be the wardens. And that would be
24 the extent of that.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: No public access?

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: No public access.
2 Correct.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay.
4 Any other questions from the members?
5 Representative Boback.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: Now I need to clarify
7 this.

8 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: So I buy a license
10 online.

11 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: And you send the
13 information to my county. And I go to my Treasurer or
14 she'll send it to me at their expense?

15 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. So the design
16 of the fee increase, right now they get 1.50 for that
17 license. They could get \$2 under the proposed fee increase.
18 Part of that was anticipating them having to mail you the
19 license from the county. That's accounted for in the \$2
20 that they receive.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: And I do apologize. I
22 was late. I had another meeting myself. So why this extra
23 step? I mean, it just seems like it's more bureaucracy that
24 I have to go through. Why can't my Treasurer just alert the
25 State? I think they're doing that now. They sold so many

1 licenses to date. This is who they send it to and make it
2 mandatory on their part. So why do we have this system
3 that's being developed? Again, it seems like it's more
4 bureaucratic. Why go through that?

5 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yeah. There's two
6 reasons for it. One -- and it's a good question because
7 we've looked at that hard. In a perfect world, all of this
8 would be local. Right. The reality is that we have this
9 mismatch of systems.

10 We have 11 counties that are still on paper that
11 they're using a tablet and a No. 2 pencil to keep track of.
12 You've got different systems, none of which we have access
13 to at the Department of Agriculture. There's no requirement
14 for the local Treasurer to share that database with the
15 Department of Agriculture. So we have no way to send
16 notices to track.

17 And then you think of that in terms of law
18 enforcement. Where's the law enforcement? So the whole
19 system piece there that we think you can reserve and
20 preserve the local autonomy for systems at the same time you
21 create a statewide database that allows us to really market,
22 communicate, to track, to inform.

23 So if a county wants to maintain their system and
24 do that locally, they do it well, under this proposal, they
25 can still do that. But they have an obligation then with

1 the license file to share that with the Department of Ag.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: And you can't make that
3 mandatory of them now?

4 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Correct.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BOBACK: Thank you.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: The flip side is the
7 Department of Agriculture could just issue the licenses and
8 not have the extra expense expended by the County Treasurer.

9 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: That's correct.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much
11 for the information. We have a number of other testifiers.
12 But the information that you presented was very helpful for
13 us as we continue to review this bill.

14 I appreciate your testimony and you joining us
15 today.

16 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It's a privilege.

17 Thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much.

19 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

20 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our next testifier is
21 Janis Creason, Dauphin County Treasurer, and a member of the
22 Dog Law Advisory Board.

23 Welcome.

24 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Thank you.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you for joining

1 us today.

2 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Thank you for inviting
3 me. It's an honor and a privilege to be here.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: You may proceed.

5 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Thank you.

6 I won't have all the facts and figures that the
7 Secretary had but I am Janis Creason, elected Dauphin County
8 Treasurer, also a member of the Dog Law Advisory Board.

9 It's an honor to be here, as I said, and come
10 willingly with information that pertains to how dog
11 licensing works in my office, how I feel about dog
12 licensing, and my remarks on the proposed amendment.

13 When I was elected as Dauphin County Treasurer,
14 one of the first meetings that I had was with, at that time,
15 Director Jessie Smith, who is the Director of Dog Law. And
16 she sat down with me at lunch and she began to go over my
17 responsibilities of selling dog licenses.

18 My background was in finance, so I was not
19 thrilled to hear that I was now in the position to sell
20 county dog licenses. Couple that with fish and game, this
21 was not my venue. So I listened to everything she said.
22 And I thought, well, if I have a responsibility, I will rise
23 to it, but I probably will not put my whole heart and soul
24 into it. I'm being very candid when I tell you that.

25 Shortly thereafter, my municipality had a tax

1 increase. And I was surprised by the amount of the tax
2 increase and that there was one, because I thought we had
3 been doing very well fiscally.

4 Being good friends with the supervisors, I
5 questioned them as to why we had this increase. They
6 explained to me that the cost of maintaining stray dogs
7 throughout our municipality was the reason for the increase
8 in the taxes.

9 The cost by the Humane Society, the fee for
10 housing a stray dog or taking possession of a stray dog had
11 risen to \$247 per dog. And that had significantly increased
12 their expenses and therefore they were passing that on as a
13 form of a tax increase to the residents of Lower Paxton
14 Township where I reside.

15 I am by nature, by my father's upbringing, a
16 fiscal conservative. He said if you see \$20 on the ground,
17 would you kick it or pick it up? I said, I'd pick it up
18 every time. And he said, then you better pick up every \$20
19 you see in whatever manner you see it. And that's been my
20 motto for most of my career.

21 So given that information, I was determined to
22 license, or help to license, as many dogs in Dauphin County
23 as I could, because I understood that if they were able to
24 reunite a dog with its owner without calling in law
25 enforcement or the Humane Society, effectively I was being

1 the best Treasurer I could be for my community because I was
2 saving them tax dollars, which has always been my goal.

3 So we did increase each year. I have increased
4 the sale of dog licenses in Dauphin County. It has been
5 difficult because there are limited funds and a lot of the
6 marketing has to be done very creatively on our own using
7 some of the funds that are available for dog law.

8 We've experimented with billboards. I've had a
9 magnet on my car, much to the disdain of my children. I
10 have sent out notices with all the letters that go to our
11 new homeowners, which has significantly increased the sales.
12 By reaching out to homeowners, most homeowners will have
13 dogs, I found.

14 When I go door to door -- I've been elected three
15 times. I go door to door now during the campaign season or
16 for any other elected official. The first thing the person
17 says to me when they see my face at the door, since I've
18 been on some of the billboards is, I have my license. And
19 I'm like, I'm not here to see if you have one. But I am
20 looking at your dog at the door and I do not see one. So
21 usually shortly therefore they complete that application.

22 Recently on the human side of it, I had a phone
23 call in the afternoon. We get several. Sometimes we have
24 five phone calls a day to reunite lost dogs, dogs that have
25 been found or someone calling to say their dog has been lost

1 and if we get a call please let them know.

2 Recently I received a call from someone in, I
3 believe, it was Fredericksburg or somewhere going east on
4 81. And they had a dog in their possession that had a
5 Dauphin County tag on it.

6 And she said, we have this dog but it's from
7 Dauphin County. And I put my name, also to the chagrin of
8 my children, on the back of the tag. So when someone finds
9 a dog, they will seek me out because my name and phone
10 number are on that tag. And they may find me through the
11 white pages or through Facebook or some other means. But
12 they will track me down all hours of the day and night.

13 So this woman called and said, I have this dog.
14 And so I immediately checked the database and I found the
15 person, the owner of the dog, her name and address. She was
16 local. And so I attempted to call her, but her phone went
17 right to voicemail. So I looked her up on Facebook and I
18 sent her a private message and said, if you get this
19 message, please contact me because I have information
20 regarding your dog.

21 And I even found her employer online. She was
22 listed in a professional directory and I called her office
23 and said, if you -- if she calls in or checks in by e-mail
24 or otherwise, would you please have her call me? So
25 interestingly enough, she was in LA. And when her plane

1 landed, she turned her phone back on and saw these messages.
2 Everyone was trying to get her. And as it turned out, she
3 had left her dog with her mother while she went on a
4 week-long business trip.

5 And her mother was at work and did not realize
6 that this dog was an escape artist and had managed to open
7 the door of the garage -- two doors, in fact, the kitchen
8 and the garage -- and had left the home. And she was
9 hysterical. She was beside herself that her dog had gotten
10 out and more so she said, where is the other dog? Because
11 her mother's dog was also in the home. And we didn't have
12 that dog.

13 So she was able to immediately call her mom. Her
14 aunt, who was at home during the day, ran and met these
15 other people and were able to retrieve the dog and go back
16 to the home and find out the other dog did not care to be an
17 escape artist or was too lazy to be one and was still in the
18 home.

19 But it's those types of situations that really
20 make the Treasurers passionate about dog licensing. It's
21 not just about putting the tag on a dog's collar. It's
22 really about public service. And some folks here have
23 asked, why is it with the Treasurers? I don't know some
24 days because it's a lot of work and it's a lot of phone
25 calls and it's a lot of responsibility. When you know that

1 someone has someone else's dog and it's a family member, you
2 take it very seriously to hang up and say, I can't get them
3 on the phone or I can't find them right now. You know,
4 they're like, well, I don't know. I may have to leave the
5 dog on the side of the road. I can't keep it any longer.
6 And it's very, very difficult.

7 We try not to call law enforcement. Sometimes we
8 do because I will make the call to the owner and say,
9 someone has your dog. How do you want me to reunite you?
10 Because I don't want someone with nefarious purposes trying
11 to, you know, get to a dog owner, maybe it's a guy/girl
12 thing or something.

13 So we will ask her if she knows the person, if
14 it's a neighbor. If they feel uncertain, we will call law
15 enforcement -- we have done that -- and say, could you
16 please accompany the finder of the dog and help the owner
17 retrieve it? So we have done that.

18 Some dog collars are attached to dogs that are no
19 longer living. And that's a very hard call, to call someone
20 at 11 o'clock at night and say, we have your dog but your
21 dog is not alive. But that tag does help to identify a dog.

22 So I hope that gives you a behind-the-scenes look
23 at not just the academics of licensing but the human side of
24 licensing and why it is so important and why I believe that
25 Treasurers are the appropriate people.

1 The same is true -- and it's a different case and
2 I won't elaborate. But I will say the same is true for the
3 constituent services we provide for those hunters who are
4 seeking antlerless deer licenses because those licenses are
5 near and dear to their hearts. And we provide those same
6 constituent services.

7 In regard to the fee, I believe the fee will be
8 very palatable to the public. Most of the time when we tell
9 someone what the fee is or I will remind someone if I see a
10 dog or I'm talking to a dog owner, have you gotten your
11 license? there are steep penalties if you do not have one
12 and your dog roams and is caught or you have any problems
13 with your dog, you can be cited, they're like, what is the
14 cost? And they're anticipating a higher cost than what I
15 say. And I say 6.50. And they're like, oh, is that all?
16 Oh, okay. I'll get one right away. What do I do? Well,
17 you can go online. You can go to one of our 12 agents. You
18 can mail it to my office, whatever the case may be.

19 So I don't feel -- over across the board in ten
20 years that I've been serving as Treasurer, I have not seen
21 any outrage or, you know, anyone finding the fee to be
22 unreasonable. A lot of people moving into the area tell me
23 that it's as much as -- I know my daughter is in New York --
24 \$50. They just pay it. So I don't find that to be
25 something that I could not endure so I could not promote.

1 Keep in mind that 80 percent of our County
2 Treasurers are already offering on-line sales to supplement
3 what they do by mail and what they do at the agents. So
4 they are already paying an additional \$2 to do that online
5 to the vendor. The Treasurer does not get that.

6 But if they want the convenience of online, we
7 must pass that on. We cannot take that out of our own
8 County revenue. So they are already paying \$2 more than
9 what you might be talking about today. Probably 50 or 60
10 percent of my sales now are online. The rest are with
11 agents.

12 And the one thing that I do see in the law that I
13 would want to see changed, because it's not practical, is
14 that the agents appear to be locked together with the
15 Treasurers. Right now I have 12 agents. I have Agways, Ace
16 Hardware. I can't get veterinarians. I beg them. I write
17 to them actually on a monthly basis. They are not
18 interested in selling these licenses. I don't know why. I
19 think it would be great. But they do not want to get into
20 it.

21 They will, however, many of them, especially
22 those who know me well, pass my forms out, mostly just so I
23 don't chastise them when I see them and they can say they're
24 doing it. So they will pass the forms out but they are not
25 really anxious to sell them at the counter.

1 Maybe they don't want the responsibility of the
2 tags because they're almost like cash, you know, because we
3 are audited for them.

4 So this bill that's being introduced does not
5 account for the fact that we have agents, that our agents
6 receive the dollar and we only receive the 50 cents when
7 they sell a tag. So we are still maintaining the records.
8 We debit them at the end of every month. We don't require
9 them to do any reporting. We've made it as simple as
10 possible for them. They simply need to be responsible for
11 the tags and sell them.

12 They get a dollar and we get the 50 cents. And
13 if you give everybody \$2 and take the agents away from us,
14 No. 1, we will lose the responsibility over them. They
15 would then require auditing. I just went through an audit
16 and it was a week-long process for Dog Law and Game. So
17 they would come out from under the auditing aspect, so I
18 would have difficulty. I think the Treasurers would
19 understand how that would work.

20 And we are the ones monitoring those agents,
21 making sure that they're responsible, that they understand
22 how important it is that these tags have value. You can't
23 go sell them on the open street. We watch them very
24 carefully. We can see online everything they've sold.

25 We require that the agents sell it through the

1 software system that we use that our vendor provides. So we
2 do not allow them to sell a tag, like just to hand write a
3 tag out. They must do it online so we can see everything.
4 We can run the report at the end of the month and charge
5 them accordingly. So I'm not sure about that.

6 There is something in the current law that does
7 require us to submit electronic records on a monthly basis
8 to Dog Law. But most of the Treasurers do not do that and
9 it is not necessarily enforced.

10 I do want to point out that what we do, the cost,
11 the fee that we receive, includes postage. We have to cover
12 our own postage, our own paper for printing, our own
13 envelopes, and our own manpower. I have one part-time
14 person. I probably pay her about \$27,000 a year. She
15 solely does licensing along with tax certs. And pretty much
16 that is her responsibility, issuing duplicate tags when
17 people lose them, doing the reporting, issuing the tags, and
18 so on.

19 So it is time-intensive, labor-intensive. The \$2
20 does not cover -- the \$1 does not come close to covering it.
21 We all know that. We do it regardless as our public service
22 and because we're mandated by law. But the \$1 does not
23 cover it. The \$2 would not cover it.

24 I don't think the Treasurers are here. And I'm
25 not representing the Association. I'm just sharing what we

1 do as Treasurers. But we are not coming here demanding that
2 we be compensated according to what we spend. But it will
3 never be a revenue producer.

4 It was nice for the Secretary to indicate he'd
5 like it to be. But it never will be. It never will be.
6 I'm a numbers person. I could in my head -- I've owned a
7 business 35 years. I can tell you very quick what income
8 and expense is all about and how it all is calculated. And
9 let me just tell you, there is no revenue to be received
10 from this process.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much
12 for the information that you've presented today.

13 Can you speak directly to whether you would
14 support this statewide system? I know you said that you
15 have your own system that you contract.

16 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: We do.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: If we created this
18 statewide system, what would you in turn do?

19 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: If the statewide system
20 was designed in a practical manner that allowed us to do
21 everything we need to do -- and that would be, you know,
22 tracking the sales, being able to -- one component, as I
23 described, is we need to be able to find the owner. We need
24 to be able to edit information when they move.

25 If all those components are there, in other

1 words, it's not a bare bones where we cannot, you know, get
2 information out of it easily, extract information, and track
3 all our sales, which I'm sure it would be, I personally
4 would be very accepting of that. I would definitely be an
5 advocate for that.

6 I believe that the systems we have now are good
7 but the Secretary is correct. There is no consistency.
8 When I took office in Dauphin County, we had no consistency
9 among tax collectors. Some were paper. Someone around my
10 office took the lead on developing a countywide tax
11 collection system. They are using that. We mandated that
12 they use it. If they did not use it, they would not get
13 their fee.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay.

15 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: So I would be
16 disingenuous to say that I wasn't going to be for a
17 statewide system when I've imposed a countywide system on
18 our 39 tax collectors.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Sure.

20 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: I think there could be
21 some resistance because there is a strong relationship built
22 between vendors and current Treasurers. But also you have
23 to keep in mind that vendors come and go. The State is here
24 consistently, just the way my office is there for the tax
25 collectors. I would rather maintain that software long term

1 knowing that my successor will also maintain that software.

2 You're not going to go out of business. You're
3 not going to pick up the phone one day and find out that the
4 person has had a heart attack and your vendor is the only
5 person that has a source code.

6 So I do believe that moving to a statewide system
7 would be, even though it may not be popular -- change is
8 never popular -- but it probably is going to be valuable to
9 us.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

11 We'll move to other questions from members.

12 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Sure.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: I would appreciate it
14 if you could be brief. We're up against a time limit here
15 with session starting at 11.

16 First member is Representative Keller.

17 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Janis, thanks for being here. We really
19 appreciate it.

20 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Sure.

21 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Couple questions. First
22 question very quickly. You've indicated that you are a
23 member of the Dog Law Advisory Board. When was the last
24 time you had a meeting?

25 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: I think our meeting was

1 in April -- March.

2 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: March. Okay. Very good.

3 Second of all, as you can see, some of the
4 documentation that was provided to us -- and I know you
5 stated you are not here representing the Treasurers
6 Association. But it was indicated to me the Treasurers
7 Association of the State does not support this bill or the
8 companion bill in the Senate.

9 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: The only thing that was
10 mentioned -- if I could interject. The only thing that was
11 mentioned at our recent conference in June when we spoke to
12 this bill was one person came up and made a statement that
13 they felt we should not take a position for or against
14 because they did not want to be in a position of advocating
15 for a fee increase.

16 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: This indicates there was
17 a vote.

18 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: There was no vote that
19 I was present for and I don't think I missed any sessions.

20 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Okay.

21 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Our president is here.

22 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: I guess maybe we should
23 reach out and ask them.

24 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: There's no position of
25 the Treasurers Association.

1 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: It's kind of confusing
2 whenever this information is provided to us. And then if it
3 really didn't take place, we need to -- you know, because
4 it's important to members that their representative
5 Treasurers are onboard with these bills. And if they're
6 not, there's a reason why they're not.

7 Of course, we provide the documentation that I
8 received from my County Treasurer that states that, you
9 know, the County Treasurers Association voted not to support
10 1463 and Senate Bill 73 at the annual convention in June of
11 2017.

12 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: I'm good friends with
13 your County Treasurer. And I don't want to say anything to
14 the contrary, but I do not recall us taking a vote other
15 than to remain neutral at the time. There was no vote not
16 to support.

17 Prior to coming here, I did communicate to all of
18 the County Treasurers through our e-mail distribution system
19 that I would be here and asked them for feedback. I
20 received it from two, one being your County Treasurer and
21 one other who is our legislative rep. And, of course, Sally
22 and I have talked. But to my knowledge, there was no formal
23 action taken at the conference.

24 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Let me get that cleared
25 up for the committee. Just clear it up. That's all.

1 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: There was definitely --
2 let me put it this way: There was definitely no discussion
3 other than one remark. I remember it clearly. And my ears
4 would perk up because I am a member of Dog Law Advisory.

5 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: I thought it should.

6 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: That would have been
7 important. And I would have been a little disturbed that I
8 wasn't asked for any input. But I let him say what he
9 wanted to say and moved on because there was no action. I
10 thought it was premature to bring it up.

11 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Okay. Very good.

12 Thank you very much.

13 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: I'm glad I could
14 clarify that for you, if that was your impression.

15 REPRESENTATIVE KELLER: Thank you.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Representative
17 Diamond.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DIAMOND: No.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Any other questions?
20 Thank you very much for your testimony.

21 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Thank you.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And the information
23 that you presented is very helpful. Thank you.

24 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Thank you.

25 I would be happy at any time -- and I think a

1 group of Treasurers would -- to fine-tune the amendments so
2 that they could be not only implemented but executed by the
3 Treasurers. I'm sure it will go through that process.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

5 TREASURER JANIS CREASON: Sure.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our next testifier is
7 Julian Prager, Second Vice President and Legislative Chair
8 with the PA Federation of Dog Clubs and a former member of
9 the Dog Law Advisory Board.

10 Welcome, sir.

11 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JULIAN PRAGER: Thank you,
12 Mr. Chairman.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you for being
14 here with us. If you could proceed with your testimony.

15 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JULIAN PRAGER: You have my
16 written testimony so I'm not going to speak directly to
17 that.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Yes, sir.

19 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JULIAN PRAGER: But I do
20 have a few things I would like to expand on.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay.

22 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JULIAN PRAGER: One is my
23 background. You should know, just for the sake of openness,
24 that we were Plaintiffs in the lawsuit against the
25 Commonwealth to restore the funds to the Dog Law restricted

1 account.

2 We also in 2008 were very involved in the changes
3 to the Dog Law, both with members of this Committee and
4 members of the Senate Committee and members of both
5 Legislatures. In fact, we awarded a member of this
6 Committee at that time our Legislator of the Year Award.
7 And I'm pleased to see that she's still a member of this
8 Committee.

9 There are a couple of things that I would like to
10 bring to your attention. One is we certainly support the
11 increases in fees. And, yes, there's an educational effort
12 that has to be undertaken in order to do that, but we don't
13 think that's an overreach.

14 The fees that the Commonwealth charges are
15 significantly lower than the fees in any comparable
16 jurisdiction. And I don't see people being unwilling to
17 safeguard their dogs. And it depends on how you sell it.
18 But to safeguard their dogs for a slightly higher cost, that
19 is something that I think people will support.

20 I have one concern with the Secretary's comments,
21 although I agree with his conclusions. And that is he
22 talked about where the revenue for Dog Law come s from but
23 not where the expenses are.

24 And we were concerned about why the bill does not
25 address kennel license fees. Because if you're talking

1 about having a system where you have essentially cost
2 centers, you ought to look at whether the activities of that
3 call center are funded by the fees associated with it. And
4 we would hope that the Committee would take a look at that.

5 I understand that there are time constraints and
6 that the Department faces significant risks if action is not
7 taken quickly. So it may not wind up as being part of this
8 bill, but it is something that we would like the Legislature
9 to consider in the future because in 2008 -- and this is now
10 nine years later -- we proposed increasing kennel license
11 fees. We proposed increasing dog license fees because it
12 had been so long. It hadn't kept up with inflation. And
13 the Department needed the funds to conduct its operations.
14 We still believe that that's true.

15 The members of the purebred dog breeding
16 community all supported increases in kennel license fees. I
17 should also say that I have a kennel license. So I'm not
18 speaking as somebody who would be unaffected by this.

19 The shelters in the Commonwealth, you know, face
20 a unique problem. Being able to take care of the
21 Commonwealth's dogs is, I think, the paramount issue that
22 should be facing them. Unfortunately -- and, again, it's
23 not stricter than the scope of this law, but we're talking
24 about reimbursements to local shelters for taking dogs in.

25 Local shelters have crowding issues. And one of

1 the reasons they have crowding issues is because dogs are
2 coming into the Commonwealth from outside the Commonwealth.
3 And I'm not talking about an emergency like we've recently
4 seen in Texas and in Florida and along the Coast. But I'm
5 talking about just generally.

6 Dogs are moving around the country. And that
7 affects the ability of the local Humane Societies and the
8 local shelters to take care of the dogs in the Commonwealth.
9 We would hope that that would be something the Legislature
10 might want to take a look at.

11 The one aspect of the current law, which is not
12 changing the proposal that we are concerned about, is the
13 differential in the fees for intact and spayed and neutered
14 dogs because that's not really a licensing issue. That's a
15 policy issue that has to do with the impact of those dogs on
16 the community.

17 And certainly from our perspective, most of the
18 shelter dogs are not purebred dogs. And we don't see
19 ourselves as contributing to that problem. And we're not
20 interested in paying additional money to support activities
21 which we're not responsible for. There's no enforcement
22 difference, no licensing difference, in finding an intact
23 dog that's not licensed and finding a spayed and neutered
24 dog that's not licensed.

25 We would hope that that distinction -- again,

1 perhaps not in this bill, but as things move forward --
2 would be eliminated from the law.

3 I would also like to mention there are -- at
4 least there were until recently -- two vacant positions on
5 the Dog Law Advisory Board, two statutory positions, which
6 affect both me and the speaker, who is going to follow me,
7 because those two positions -- they may have been filled;
8 I'm not sure -- were for a representative of a purebred dog
9 registry and a representative of dog clubs.

10 And it seems to me that the Dog Law Advisory
11 Board is missing some significant input by having those two
12 positions vacant. And I would hope that the Department
13 would move forward to fill those vacancies.

14 Thank you for inviting me to speak to you. I, of
15 course, would be glad to discuss anything with you in the
16 future should you want our input.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much
18 for your testimony.

19 Mr. Secretary, are those two positions still
20 vacant, do you know?

21 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: I believe they are.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Okay. Thank you.

23 Any questions from the members?

24 Representative Millard.

25 REPRESENTATIVE MILLARD: Not a question. But I

1 think that you mentioned about the licensing kennels with
2 this. There's no question that, you know, they're all
3 germane to what is being proposed here.

4 However, I think the issue before this Committee
5 today is to focus on the individual dog owners and if they
6 license their pet, their domesticated pet. And, you know, I
7 think the kennels and everything else is, again, although
8 it's germane -- I'm not going to speak for the Secretary --
9 but I think even though it's germane that that isn't the
10 issue today.

11 The focal point today is to ensure that each
12 individual dog owner pays their way to support the good work
13 that the Department of Ag does.

14 And I do want to take one minute to compliment
15 your Department and the dog wardens. You know, less than
16 two months ago, my wife was viciously attacked by a dog.
17 Your Department was very responsive. And when I tell you
18 that it was a vicious attack, I'm not understating it. You
19 were Johnny-on-the-spot.

20 Thank you.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Any other questions?

23 Thank you, sir, for the information that you've
24 presented today.

25 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JULIAN PRAGER: You're

1 welcome.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Our next presenter is
3 Mr. John Gibble, the Political Action Chair for the
4 Northeast Beagle Federation and also a former member of the
5 Dog Law Advisory Board.

6 Welcome, sir.

7 ACTION CHAIR JOHN GIBBLE: Good morning.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: You may proceed.

9 ACTION CHAIR JOHN GIBBLE: I thought I could come
10 here and give you perhaps a user's experience with the dog
11 licensing, the folks that I speak for, Beagle Clubs, folks
12 that hunt and field trial.

13 Gary and Linda Slick said good morning.

14 Probably every one of your districts I could
15 throw a rock off your district office and probably hit one
16 of the Beaglers. Your district, sir, Susquehanna Beagle
17 Club over by Berwick. There's quite a few of us around.
18 Dogs, coyotes, hounds, coon hunters. It's a good
19 constituency.

20 Most of us have several dogs. We might breed a
21 dog on occasion, but it's not a commercial affair by any
22 means. Many of us had kennel licenses back until 2008. And
23 at that point, we were, frankly, harassed out of that and
24 forced to -- some of us downsized to make sure that we
25 stayed under the 26 threshold, 26-dog threshold, and just

1 went to buying individual dog licenses. I'll admit that
2 probably a lot of them have bypassed buying dog licenses
3 since.

4 In my experience, several years ago I would go to
5 my veterinarian and purchase a dog license I needed. It was
6 an annual trip there. The dogs that needed rabies
7 vaccinations went along. We purchased the dog licenses at
8 the time. For some reason, the veterinarians don't seem to
9 do that anymore.

10 Nowadays I head over to the Veterans Center there
11 in New Bloomfield and pester the Treasurer and get my eight
12 or ten dog licenses there.

13 As Julian alluded to, sometimes we had a little
14 trouble with the 4.50, the 6.50, or the 8.50 based on
15 whether they're spayed or neutered, yeah, okay, do that one
16 it's 6.50. This one is 8.50. So if we could kind of focus
17 on going towards a universal fee for a dog license, it would
18 make some of our lives a little easier.

19 I buy a hunting license. And I know the Game
20 Commission is doing a good job bringing -- managing game,
21 gamelands, places for me to engage in hunting. I buy a fish
22 license. I go up and fish beautiful lakes that the Fish
23 Commission maintains. They stock trout in streams for us to
24 fish.

25 I come to buy a dog license and I have to scratch

1 my head as to why I buy it. Okay. The Department says it's
2 your dog's ticket home. Their website says they pick up 50
3 to 100 dogs per month. Their annual report from 2016 says
4 they handled 5,009 stray dogs. I sincerely doubt that those
5 were all stray dogs.

6 With 46 wardens, that would be over 100 dogs per
7 warden, per year. A lot of these have to do with the kennel
8 operations or hoarding operations that are being depopulated
9 and those dogs shuttled to shelters.

10 If we go with the 50 to 100 dogs per month,
11 that's 900, 1,200 a year. 919,000 licenses -- I'm sorry --
12 964,000 licenses that were sold last year, that's a
13 one-in-a-thousand chance that my dog is going to go there.

14 Now what happens when my dog is picked up?
15 Oftentimes the dog is delivered to a shelter because there's
16 only 83 shelters that are currently accepting stray dogs in
17 the Commonwealth. It may be another county or two counties
18 over. Now that dog that was lost from my backyard is now
19 60, 70 miles from my home. Oftentimes these dogs lose their
20 collars. The collar could be taken off.

21 Representative Tobash, one of your constituents
22 related a story where his dog was in a shelter for three
23 days properly tagged and with a collar. He called the
24 shelter directly and was told repeatedly that the dog was
25 not there. Luckily for him his mother was a volunteer at

1 the very same shelter and found the dog.

2 Why this happens, I have no idea. Are these dogs
3 being marketed? You know, is that \$300 adoption fee after
4 48 hours that important? I have no idea. But that system
5 is not working. Our local Facebook page seems to work very
6 well. I know if I would post on there that I lost a dog,
7 there would be an army of busybodies launched in the
8 neighborhood, headed out, picking up my dog and bringing it
9 right to my house.

10 I often wonder how many times the dog is picked
11 up running down the street in front of the house. If we had
12 this electronic system that's being proposed, you know, the
13 warden or police officer could reference right there, say
14 this dog belongs at 119 North Market Street, and go directly
15 to the home before we go to the shelter.

16 But instead we drive two counties over to drop
17 the dog off where it's not found or we have difficulties
18 finding it. So I have trouble saying that you need to pay
19 more money for this kind of service.

20 In June this year, Representatives from Lancaster
21 County might remember the news report of the dangerous --
22 registered dangerous dog that broke through a fence and
23 attacked two children being strapped in their minivan. \$500
24 a year to keep a case of dynamite in your neighborhood seems
25 like a rather small fee considering the danger to the

1 public.

2 We've heard the Secretary talk about the expenses
3 of that program and perhaps if you choose to maintain that
4 type of dog, then you should be required to pay for that
5 service. I don't see where it's my responsibility or the
6 responsibility of responsible dog owners.

7 Likewise with the kennel licenses. I was on the
8 Advisory Board back in 2008 when we went through all of this
9 stuff. And we cautioned at that time, two annual
10 inspections -- last year it was 5,200 and some of the 2,340
11 facilities -- that's a big expense, more than the \$414,000
12 that was brought in on the sale of county licenses.

13 Non-profits. They get a \$25 kennel license to
14 bring in as many dogs as they want to the Commonwealth,
15 train, maintain, keep. But only 83 of those 405 non-profit
16 kennels are actually providing a service by accepting stray
17 dogs. I really don't think our folks are interested in
18 supporting that end of things either.

19 So that's kind of the user's perspective. And
20 I'll cut it short from there. You have my testimony. I
21 appreciate greatly that you heard me.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Are there any
23 questions?

24 Thank you very much for your testimony. It's
25 very helpful as we move forward with the consideration of

1 this bill.

2 ACTION CHAIR JOHN GIBBLE: Thank you.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: And our last testifier
4 is Mary Kennedy Withrow, current member of the Dog Law
5 Advisory Board.

6 Thank you for joining us.

7 MARY KENNEDY WITHROW: Thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: You may proceed.

9 MARY KENNEDY WITHROW: Thank you.

10 You all have my testimony so I'll keep this
11 brief. A lot of what I was going to say people have already
12 said. I would like to -- like Janis, I am also a
13 Republican, a fiscal conservative. My grandfather served in
14 this same House.

15 I want to remind people that even though it's a
16 license, it's essentially a user fee. If you don't own a
17 dog, you don't pay. What makes it different is that what is
18 paid to the Department of Agriculture for dog licensing
19 protects all Pennsylvanians. So everybody benefits from the
20 user fee paid by dog owners.

21 It would make more sense fiscally to increase the
22 user fee rather than have the cost -- we have to borrow the
23 money and then every Pennsylvanian is then contributing to
24 the cost of owning a dog.

25 One other thing -- I'll just keep this brief,

1 too. I would like to actually write something as a person
2 who has been a shelter director at two of the largest
3 shelters in Pennsylvania. I would kind of like to write
4 some rebuttal to some of the things, information about
5 shelters, your question about how the law will change with
6 Libre's Law.

7 In Pittsburgh we've had a tethering ban for four
8 years so I can speak to stats about that. I could maybe
9 submit to Kerry something that would answer some of the
10 questions.

11 The other thing that I would like to mention,
12 too, is one thing dog wardens are responsible for are rabies
13 tags. Rabies is 99.9 percent fatal to humans. So it does
14 need to be monitored.

15 And as far as there only being 83 shelters who
16 are holding dogs -- and wardens are not just the only people
17 that bring dogs into an open-door shelter. They come in all
18 day. And the cost of our shelter was \$33 a day. So we get
19 reimbursed for \$40 for a dog that we're going to spend
20 thousands on literally.

21 I think everything else has been said that needs
22 to be said. I don't want to hold you guys up any longer.
23 Really appreciate the chance to testify.

24 Kerry, thank you.

25 I hope that you will all support House Bill 1463.

1 It's desperately needed. We can't keep cutting human
2 capital.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you very much.

4 Are there any questions?

5 Representative Millard.

6 REPRESENTATIVE MILLARD: Mr. Chairman, I would
7 hope that we could provide the Secretary a chance to clarify
8 the differentiation in the fees for spayed and neutered and
9 non-spayed and neutered. I think that it's to control
10 population, an incentive to do that. But I'd like to hear
11 that directly.

12 Thank you.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: We can offer the
14 Secretary that opportunity, if he would like.

15 Are there any questions for our testifier?

16 If not, thank you very much.

17 MARY KENNEDY WITHROW: Thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: The information that
19 you presented is very helpful.

20 MARY KENNEDY WITHROW: Okay.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you for joining
22 us today.

23 MARY KENNEDY WITHROW: Thank you.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Mr. Secretary, you're
25 back.

1 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: It's good to see you
2 again.

3 I think it's a population-control issue. I don't
4 know the whole history here. Maybe Kristen can share some
5 of that or we can follow up in writing with the Committee of
6 just the history of whether, you know, over the course of
7 years this is a relatively new development or if that really
8 has been sort of part and parcel to a dog law in
9 Pennsylvania. I honestly don't know that.

10 But I know just in the conversations around the
11 Dog Law Advisory Board and the Bureau it's been sort of the
12 population-control piece and some incentive to get the
13 spayed and neutered done if it's not.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Thank you.

15 Any other questions?

16 Representative Madden.

17 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Yes.

19 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: I have a quick question.
20 I'm certainly in favor of the two different prices for a dog
21 that's spayed or neutered because I know when I brought my
22 dog -- my husband brought my dog yesterday to the AWSOM
23 Clinic for a check-up, that's the first thing they ask. If
24 they pick up a stray dog, there's more cost to spay and
25 neuter a dog.

1 I guess my other question is, is there a
2 different price or should there possibly be a different
3 price for a pet owner who has taken the time to put a chip
4 in a dog so that, as Mr. Gibble was saying, you know, two
5 counties away the dog had to be taken because they didn't
6 know who the dog was. But if there was a chip, then they
7 have -- it would have been quicker to get that dog to its
8 owner.

9 And I know we had that problem. My husband found
10 a stray dog. We brought it to our local shelter. And it
11 had a chip and the dog was reunited within an hour of being
12 found.

13 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

14 DIRECTOR KRISTEN DUNMOYER: That would be the
15 lifetime license. As part of a requirement to have that
16 license, the dog has to be microchipped or tattooed.

17 REPRESENTATIVE MADDEN: Excellent. Thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Chairman Pashinski.

19 MINORITY CHAIRMAN PASHINSKI: I thank you very
20 much, Mr. Chairman.

21 I want to thank the Secretary and everyone that
22 came here today and testified. Your testimony was extremely
23 valuable.

24 And, Mary, I really would look forward to your
25 assessment. Your experience is invaluable. And, you know,

1 your observations today will definitely help us as we
2 continue on with this.

3 But a sincere thank you to everyone for your
4 testimony.

5 Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the
6 opportunity to bring this bill forward.

7 Thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Mr. Secretary, I
9 didn't expect you to do double duty and come back up. But
10 since you did stay with us and heard the additional
11 testimony, in the last couple of minutes that we have, do
12 you have any closing thoughts regarding anything that you
13 heard in the testimony or any additional brief points that
14 you'd like to make before we adjourn?

15 SECRETARY RUSSELL REDDING: Yes.

16 Mr. Chairman, thank you. I'll just say that the
17 conversation has actually been very helpful. I mean,
18 there's sort of a confirmation of, you know, you need the
19 fee. We need to do something. We can't stay on the path
20 we're on.

21 Two is, I think the functionality of the on-line
22 system and how do we respect the County Treasurers and, as
23 Janis has pointed out, it really has been key to that sort
24 of community and the local point of contact and the
25 sensitivity to that, I think, are really going to be

1 important.

2 Three, this discussion about the fees for kennels
3 -- and as I said in the testimony at the offset, we didn't
4 focus on that, just given the, you know, 85, 87 percent of
5 the income to the Bureau. We really put the emphasis on the
6 fee and being sensitive to some fees were increased. Kennel
7 fees increased in 2008. That would be -- that was our
8 focus.

9 I think this continued conversation of how you
10 address sort of the unlicensed, currently unlicensed dogs, I
11 think that's part of the perpetual challenge. You have a
12 lot of these dogs that are in the Commonwealth that are here
13 now and are a public concern, health and safetywise, that
14 we're not presently getting into the system.

15 I think that collective challenge of, how do you
16 do that? Do you do it prior to first purchase? Do you do
17 it, you know, through the veterinarians? I mean, I think
18 that is a conversation worth continuing of, how do we do
19 that?

20 We know we have natural points of access for
21 animal care. How do we do it? Is there a conversation? and
22 even larger around sort of the pet food companies and the
23 retail and the services provided that are beyond, you know,
24 healthcare for dogs. It could be part of this conversation
25 about how to bring them into this.

1 But overall, Mr. Chairman, just very helpful. I
2 think that you've got the really good foundation within
3 1463. And we appreciate Representative Pashinski having
4 this hearing.

5 We'll go back. I mean, I really want to follow
6 up on a couple of points. You were asking about the Dog Law
7 Advisory Board and the appointments there. I want to have
8 that conversation with staff just to figure out where we
9 are.

10 And we have a Dog Law Advisory Board meeting
11 coming in a couple weeks.

12 We really appreciate your interest and help to
13 focus this conversation and legislation.

14 Thank you.

15 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN CAUSER: Well, thank you very
16 much to you and your team for being here today and the
17 information that's been presented.

18 As I said, it's a formal public hearing so there
19 will be a transcript for anybody that would like the
20 transcript. And the video will also be available.

21 Thank you to everyone. This meeting is
22 adjourned.

23 (Whereupon, the hearing adjourned.)
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I hereby certify that the proceedings and
evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes
taken by me on the within proceedings and that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

Jean M. Davis
Notary Public