

Joseph Drazek
Woodland / Sherman
LD 133

Due to the timing of the snow arriving during the Public Hearing, I am submitting my testimony, as I did not get the opportunity to finish my statement. Thank you. Joe Drazek

I want you to just think for a minute how vast the State of Maine actually is. How big it is. How you think there is plenty of space and how things are seemingly spread out. Then think about if you have a close neighbor who is not a good one, how small the space becomes..

I think there are some misconceptions on what an ACO actually can do. Searching Maine.gov results in only 7 mentions of barking dogs and that is all in reference to the agricultural working dog exemption. There is NO mention of either “yelping” or “howling” at all.

What is the point of having an Animal Control Officer, if they have no ability to have the appropriate “control” when necessary?

This keeps coming up because the small municipalities and towns with limited gov’t resources and the Unorganized territories DEPEND on the state for their laws. There is currently no mechanism to handle this. I’ve attended AWAC for years to address this and spoke with Rhonda Stucik as well as the State Humane Agent Chrissy MacFarlane who has 20 years of experience and has told me that something like this is exactly what is needed to give the ACO’s the tool in the toolbox they have been missing. It would be covered by not only them, but State Police and the Sheriffs office when needed. We’re not talking about Portland, Augusta and Bangor here.. These are areas without local boards to be able to deal with these things.

All other industries Statewide are either monitored, regulated or licensed with guidelines and rules. For whatever reason, dogs and especially Dog Kennels are isolated from being included as a potential noise creator even though it is the State that issues the license. You can’t run a cement mixer in your yard, blow train horns whenever you want, have loud music or do burnouts up and down your street to be a disruption to your neighborhood because there are laws against it. But not Dogs. Look it up. That is why these people in favor of this law, or some similar legislative action are here.

It “could” happen now anywhere, to Any One. Just because it hasn’t happened to you yet, without this in place, don’t worry - it’s just a matter of time. Earlier testimony before us spoke of Private property rights. That’s what this is. Defending private property and rights.

Once the word continues to get out certain Maine communities have this loophole, it will spread and even more kennels / or commercial uses will move in at the expense of the residents. It already has. Even long standing generational families will have no defense. It can even have an effect and stress on your own pets. This can also create more of a mess for the State. If you are truly a dog advocate, then what do you have to fear if this law finally allows ACO’s to complete their duties and save animals?

Small towns and their neighborly threads will continue to be exposed and further taken advantage of by out of town/state or area puppy mills and have no enforceable noise regulations or hours. It is not right and it’s not fair in a state that touts so highly it’s focus on equality. If you don’t vote in favor of this measure, then I guess you’ll learn how bad it can be when it happens to you or a member of your family.

Where are the representatives for the Irresponsible Dog owners? They aren’t here? No, they’re the reason we are, though.

I’m against this because I don’t think it goes far enough
But I am for it because it’s better than nothing