

Inger Kopf  
Sullivan  
LD 1771

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and Members of the ACF Committee, I am writing in strong support of L.D. 1771, An Act to Strengthen Oversight of Kennels by Changing the Licensing Authority from Municipalities to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

While most kennels in Maine are currently licensed through the state, there is a smaller segment of kennels that don't fall under these rules and instead are licensed through municipalities. Smaller, rural towns do not always have the resources to properly track, inspect, and enforce animal welfare laws in these municipal kennels. Some of these towns do not even have dedicated Animal Control Officers working for them, meaning animals at these kennels can slip through the cracks and don't have the protections our laws are designed to provide. This could have such a positive impact on animal welfare.

By shifting municipally licensed kennels to instead fall under the state's existing kennel licensing system, L.D. 1771 would enable better records keeping, general oversight, and enforcement of animal welfare laws.

Having uniformity in licensing and inspections for all types of kennels and ensuring these facilities can be inspected by the state, not just towns, provides an additional safeguard for the animals. Having all kennel licenses managed at a state level will remove some of the financial and oversight burden from the towns and allow for state support on animal welfare issues when needed.

Please vote to move this commonsense bill forward.

Thank you,  
Inger Kopf