

Wendy Andresen
CAMDEN
LD 1771

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and Members of the ACF Committee, I emphatically 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.

Most kennels in Maine are currently licensed through the state, but some do not fall under these rules and instead are licensed through municipalities. Small 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 that animals at these kennels can slip through the cracks and don't have the protections our laws are designed to provide.

L.D. 1771 would shift municipally licensed kennels to fall instead under the state's existing kennel licensing system, which 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 by 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.