

Steven Dostie  
Leeds  
LD 1771

May 11, 2025

Hello,

My name is Steven Dostie, and I reside in Leeds, Maine. After 38 years in the animal welfare field, I'm now retired. My wife, a licensed veterinary technician and certified canine physical therapist, and I share a passion for dogs. Along with our granddaughter, we spend most of our free time exhibiting our dogs in various activities such as agility, obedience, tracking, scent work, water work, dock diving, conformation and field trials. As hobby breeders, we may have a couple of litters per year.

I'm writing to express my concerns about LD 1771, mostly the proposed change to municipal kennel licenses. Currently, hobby breeders with five or more dogs typically hold a municipal kennel license, with their dogs integrated into family life. If the municipal license is replaced with a Facility Kennel License, I'd like to know if the inspection checklist will remain the same or align with those for commercial for profit kennels. This could require significant changes, such as non-porous floors, separate isolation areas, and puppy areas isolated from their human and canine family, which would be detrimental to early puppy development.

The bill summary indicates that the Department will oversee the new license, shifting responsibility from municipalities. I'm unsure why this change is necessary, as the new kennel license seems similar to the current municipal license. I do agree that the Department should conduct yearly inspections if municipalities lack Animal Control Officers. But I do not think this is the root of the problem. The problem as I see it is that we need properly trained ACOs who get paid a livable wage. Only then can ACOs can take pride in the work they do by helping the people and animals in their communities stay safe.

I believe treating hobby breeders as commercial breeders would be a mistake. Hobbyist breed dogs out of love and passion, not for profit. Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the public session last Tuesday due to an emergency, but I plan to attend the work session this week.

Sincerely,

Steven Dostie  
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