

From: Ross Macfarlane <[REDACTED]>
Sent: September 24, 2018 10:40 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Concern Over Proposed Amendments to the Nova Scotia Animal Protection Act – Bill 27

Re: Proposed Amendments to the Nova Scotia Animal Protection Act – Bill 27

24 September 2018
Law Amendments Committee
Province House
1726 Hollis Street
Halifax, N.S. B3J 2Y3

To: Law Amendments Committee
re Bill No. 27 - Animal Protection Act

As a former member of the Canadian Forces and as a long time, responsible, owner of purebred dogs and a cat owner (including various rescue cats), after consulting with various friends and doing what research I could, I would like to add my voice to that of others and request that the Nova Scotia government seek consultation from additional stakeholders, to develop legislation that is well crafted and FAIR.

My first two concerns are focused on citizens who travel for their work or who have been posted to NS for a period of time for their work, such as members of the armed forces.

a) I am concerned about how much responsibility is to be placed on "custodians" who are not the dog's owner and on how any occupant of a private dwelling may be forced to present an animal for inspection even if they are not familiar with it. (For example a visitor or relative, an employee or contractor).

This is made worse by what appears to be a very short window of opportunity for appeal. Take the example of a sailor on a 3 week deployment who has left a dog with family or a friend. If there should be a problem he could well return from his duty to find that his companion has been seized and given away or destroyed.

b) I have no opinion either way on docking or cropping but what if someone whose dog has cropped ears which were done elsewhere but who has now relocated to NS and is then stopped and harassed on the street because they appear to have violated that section of the act? It is not clear that they could not be charged for cruelty, have their pet seized and be subjected to stress and the expense of a legal struggle even if they win. If they lost, they could face a huge fine or JAIL!?

Laws should not leave such things to the future good will of an organization with very little, if any, oversight.

These dangers to civil rights is made worse by the weakening and removal of reference to animals being "in distress". It seems that it is left to the discretion or "whim" of any inspector to inspect any premises at any "reasonable"?? hour of the night or day. (what is a reasonable hour of the night to seize someone's pet? A friend of my wife was threatened with being charged because her dogs were confined in a back porch for 10 minutes without after coming in from the yard with muddy feet).

I suggest that this Bill be sent back for more study and that a wider variety of stakeholders be included, including the Canadian Kennel Club and other equivalent National Clubs for other animals so that both sides of the issues may be addressed and a good solid animal protection bill will result.

Sincerely,

Ross Michael Macfarlane