
From: Dawn Tufts <[REDACTED]>
Sent: September 23, 2018 11:41 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Proposed Bill 27 - Animal Protection Act - To have tabled for further amendments.

Good day

I'm writing regarding the proposed Bill 27 that is coming before the Law Amendments Committee again on Monday, Sept 24-2018

There is no doubt the SPCA provides an invaluable service to the community, and am glad to see language incorporated on the proposed bill regarding dog fighting.

However, I feel there are sections within the bill wherein the verbiage is a broad brush approach, which will likely create inconsistencies in execution and unexpected consequences. And ask that Bill 27 not be approved as written, but instead have all of the Stakeholders involved in a review of updating same, before final approval.

I've had animals/pets most of my life, (owned horses, cats, dogs and a ferret) and have resided in Halifax for 40+ years. I'm also on the executive of three dog clubs, all whom support the initiatives as set out by the Canadian Kennel Club for responsible owners, breeders, etc. And feel the key in educating the public on responsible ownership lies in open communication and transparency.

Our dogs bring us great joy with their companionship and the activities we participate in with them, and are a beloved part of our family. With some of the proposed amendments it affords the ability for inspectors to enter premises at any time for an undefined apparent reason, and to perform tests (and these are not defined either), some could be harmful/stressful to an animal that may have an existing health condition. Or with an inspectors ability to have unfettered access to lands, etc which could aid in the spread of diseases. As with some horses this summer and the strangles outbreak or with dogs and spread of kennel cough, it does happen.

In summary the main concerns are:

2 (f) Use of Custodian versus owner.

This encompass everything from leaving your dog at a vet, daycare and they have the custodial rights. I disagree, as the owner I am responsible and am not conveying those rights to another. This could be expanded in length throughout the document, but would be better served in review by all stakeholders.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Sec 7 (5) Board of Directors of Society appointed by Minister who are employees in the civil service of the Province. Given their responsibilities, it should define a candidate's qualifications, training and aptitude for same. As well, as that of Provincial Inspectors.

Animal Welfare Inspections

11 (1) – Chief Inspectors and inspectors are responsible.... – does not detail qualifications for these positions (as above)

12 (2) Appointment of Chief Inspector... as above in (Sec 7 (5)). Only a minimum of qualifications as described by the regulations.

16 (2) speaks to delegating power conferred without details of qualifications for same.

20 (1) (a) At reasonable hour enter premises. While includes caveat "other than a private dwelling" many kennels, boarding facilities, grooming shops are located within a private dwelling. Where is the line here?

(b) Conduct tests... Which tests, and for what purpose.

(c) Seize an animal for tests... as above. Change in language here, with the removal of no "just cause" and adds subjective "may have been". This affords inspectors the ability to seize with no apparent reason. Where is the legality in this?

(d) seize an animal >>> defined by the Act. While agree if mistreated/abused an appropriate action should be taken. This is worded in broad sense, and left to individual interpretation.

Protecting the Welfare of Animals

Throughout this section the language of inspector or peace officer appears as interchangeable. Which now affords an inspector the same legal rights as a police officer or RCMP? The concern is, only the latter has received the extensive formal training.

While these are only a few items, some of the language is interspersed throughout the twenty-one pages of the Bill, and has need of clarifications.

And as such ask that Bill 27 not be approved. But rather, to have further review and input from the multiple stakeholders, all whom have the best interest of their pets.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Dawn Tufts