

USDA/APHIS Proposes Federal Licensing and Inspection of Many Home Hobby Breeders

<http://www.cfainc.org/client/exhibitorsalert.aspx>

On May 10, 2012 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a proposal for broad new rules to regulate pet breeders who sell directly to the public. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) unit currently regulates large-scale commercial breeders who sell animals at wholesale or for research. Hobby breeders selling directly to the public at retail are exempt from federal regulation. State and local governments already can regulate all breeders; and buyers can, whether or not all actually do, visit the breeders' premises.

The USDA is under fire for lax enforcement of existing law. Last year Assistant Senate Majority Leader Dick Durbin introduced in the US Senate the Durbin-Vitter "Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety Act" (PUPS) to require federal licensing and inspection of many home hobby breeders (see below). As the PUPS bill has become stalled in congress, proponents are circumventing the process by having the agency amend regulations without need of new legislation.

The proposed new rules will be much broader than the PUPS bill. The new regulations include all small animal species, including cats, and would require licensing of catteries who sell even one kitten without the buyer actually entering their home to view the animal. Only a cattery with 4 or fewer "breeding females" would be exempt. (Of course, since this is a regulation and not a law that limit could be lowered even more.) Below is a link to Joan Millers article about this USDA/APHIS proposal with background information as a first step in understanding. **CFA OPPOSES.**

* [Federal licensing of cat breeders – a heads up !!](#) (May 15, 2012)

CURRENT STATUS: There is a 60 day period from publication of the rules in the Federal Register for comments by individuals and groups. We are working on an official comment letter by CFA. Since text of the comment letters is public there is some disadvantage to an early submission, which allows the opposition more opportunity to manufacture a rebuttal. We will be providing updates, links to sample

letters and other information for clubs and individuals which will be posted on the CFA website legislative alerts page as they are needed. Please be patient and wait until the time is right to submit our comments. Please watch this website for updates.