

September 24, 2018

Honourable Mark Furey,

I am writing you as a concerned pet owner with regards to Bill 27 and the impact this will have on our communities in Nova Scotia.

A little background about me; I have always loved dogs since I was a young girl. I had the privilege to volunteer at my local veterinary office and assist with the upkeep of kennels in my community. I have two dogs and a cat and am currently a Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) member. I always wanted to have my own dog and pursue performance goals with my dog. My dogs and I currently participate in Rally, Obedience, herding and conformation events. These experiences have allowed me to develop a strong bond with my dogs and meet some amazing dog-loving people.

When Bill 27 was introduced on Thursday (September 13), it took a lot of dog owners by surprise, myself included. The bill was rushed through the first and second reading in a matter of two days and this brings great concern. According to those involved in the creation of this bill, there were meetings for a year and half, yet no mention to the public about this topic. Not all parties were consulted for input. Conspicuously "uninvited" was the CKC Director for Nova Scotia. This is extremely disappointing as she would be a great resource of information.

The proposed act uses the term "Custodian" instead of owner. This change strips owners of their rights that come with ownership. I am responsible for the decisions that are in the best interest of my pets and should be the only person considered to be owner. By use of this term, it allows the person who is currently in possession of the dog (ex. Groomer, daycare attendant, thief, if stolen, etc.) to be deemed responsible and the official owner may not be contacted.

In section 20 (a), (b) & (e) of the proposed act, it states an inspector or peace officer may

At any reasonable hour of the day or night, enter and inspect any premises, other than a private dwelling place, conduct any test, take samples.

In the previous act, the phrasing "When an animal is found in distress" was included in this section. The removal of this requirement would now allow SPCA inspectors the right to enter a property without probable cause at any time of day. I am often home alone with my pets and a stranger entering my property without my permission or probable cause would be extremely frightening and could cause distress to my animals. We have a legal right to privacy and the protection of our property from trespassers according to the Property Protection Act. It also brings into question what kind of tests will be conducted? What kind of samples can be taken? What are my pets to be subjected too? The proposed act provides only generic descriptions or no explanation at all, and brings me concerns for the welfare of my pets.

In section 20 (8), it states

"an inspector may enter on or pass over any land or water, whether enclosed or not, without being liable for trespass and without the owner of the property having the right to object"

This again should be considered against the Property Protection Act (for those who own the land) and can put land, animals and herds at risk of bio-security contamination. By visiting many kennels, farms or properties, inspectors and officers can transmit potentially devastating parasites, pathogens and illnesses to otherwise healthy animals through clothing, footwear or other methods. When I participate in dog events (such as dog shows) there is a risk of bringing home a parasite or illness. In order to minimize that risk, responsible dog owners change clothing, disinfect footwear and thoroughly clean all our equipment to avoid this concern. This part of the proposed act can put animals at risk and cost owners large and unexpected veterinary bills to get their pets healthy again. On top of those risks, having strange people enter a property or an enclosed field without the consent of the owner will cause distress to the animals on the property and can potential be dangerous for both parties (animal and inspector).

In section 27 (2) it discusses "cosmetic procedures" not being permitted to be performed on an animal. These procedures are commonly performed in farming communities and under section 28 (b) are acceptable animal husbandry practices for animals such as sheep and pigs. Practices of tail docking and dew claw removal prevent injuries on active dogs. If similar practices are to be allowed for farmers on their livestock, why would some of these procedures not be acceptable animal husbandry in dogs? There are many working breeds who are active in situations in which they can potentially be seriously injured if their tails and dew claws were left intact.

I have met many pet owners, breeders and overall dog lovers since I began working on my goals. Some of these people have been involved in the dog community for decades. Their dogs are some of the healthiest and happiest dogs I've ever seen. They are all well fed, well exercised, well groomed and have temperaments to die for! I believe they make decisions that are in the best interest of their dogs and not ones that would mutilate or cause distress or damage.

This section of the proposed act has created very mixed, outspoken opinions in public and especially online. Veterinarian Hugh Chisholm has been using inflammatory language online and is posting that dogs' tails are being "chopped off" and that people are "mutilating" animals. He is doing this to create angry, rageful responses and incite people who favour of passing this bill without the input of all stakeholders. Further consultation with ALL stakeholders is needed. This type of conversation is creating misinformed opinions and preventing all animal lovers (SPCA, pet owners, breeders, etc.) from working together on stronger legislation.

I would like to bring forward my concern about lack of accountability of the SPCA. This is a concern with these new changes. The new act would give the SPCA more power, in some cases even more than police. Who is reviewing or monitoring their actions? Should there be a third party that is able to review their actions?

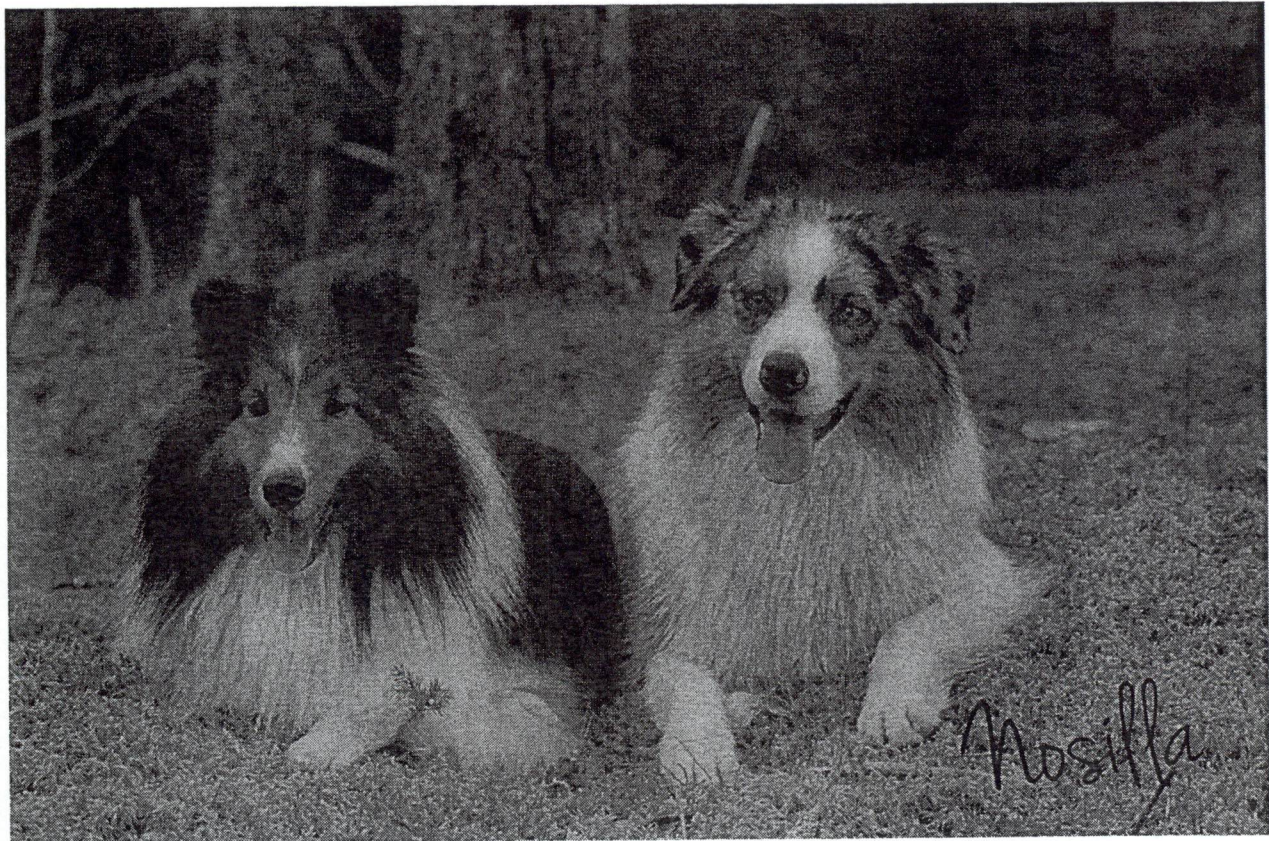
Lastly, I have huge concerns with the current training required by the SPCA. What qualifications do inspectors, officers and the chief require to be responsible to determine the condition and standards of our pets? The Chief inspector spoke of officer training but failed to mention any behavioural, medical or other training methods required to deal with dogs and other animals. With so many different breeds, sizes, coat styles, how is an inspector with no background in animal structure or medical knowledge able to adequately determine if the animal is in good condition? These questions and concerns need to be addressed in order for people to feel that the inspectors are able to make good decisions with regards to our pets.

The social media outbreak on this issue has been extreme. I believe this bill has great potential but needs some changes to improve the areas that are too generic or vague and tighten laws so we understand what this means for our pets. I have attached some images in the email of some of the disrespectful manners used by those "for" the bill to get their views heard. I would expect people to share their opinions and experiences in a professional, civilized manner and remain open minded to other views and ideas.

Our number one priority should be the welfare and protection of our companion animals. We should take advantage of the people in our community with dog (and other animal) experience and knowledge. These people are assets and resources that can improve this bill. Unfortunately, some individuals are using this bill as an opportunity to further an agenda against well respected, reputable breeders, scare pet owners and divide a community. We must rebuild the public mistrust among agencies.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. If there are any questions or request for further discussion, I am available for further consultation.

Allison Mair & my two dogs pictured below





People for Dogs

Yesterday at 10:36 PM

IN OTHER NEWS ... A Doberman today decided that a Nova Scotia CKC representative named Ms.Emily Gratton needed her ears cropped for cosmetics ... WITHOUT her consent! Tomorrow, the Doberman will then decide if she needs her tail cut off with scissors in a 'kennel' and then she will be given back to her mother... and later sold



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Write a comment...





Allison Mair

So many uneducated comments!!!!
None of you know nothing about breeding... it seems the only word you know MUTILATION which is being fed to you to create such a negative reaction by someone who has a personal agenda and isn't thinking about the big picture. I CANNOT believe the disrespect, childish photos, comments and language being used to "further their view" it's basically bullying and is totally unacceptable. People are entitled to their opinions and everyone should respect that and be able to discuss with civility. It is only those that keep an open mind with all aspects that will be successful in helping further the sections of this bill that protect animals. Breeders HAVE NOT stated they oppose the bill in total but wish that changes be made to improve the areas that are too generic and tighten laws so we all have a better understanding of what it means to our community. THIS IS NOT ABOUT



Write a comment...





laws so we all have a better understanding of what it means to our community. THIS IS NOT ABOUT DOCKING AND CROPPING! This is about the overall bill and it's potential lack of ability to be able to stand up in court.

48m Like Reply



Marie Leloup

Double negatives by the educated. Such sweet irony.

37m Like Reply



Write a reply...



Norma Reid

That is the most disgusting thing I have seen in a long time! Honestly, can you not argue your poi ya in a mature manner.

To the general public, this will not help your case.

I am totally disgusted .

1h Like Reply



Write a comment...





People for Dogs's Post



Jessica Sheffield

wow, just so everyone knows this is cyber bullying and will be report to police.

9h Like Reply



People for Dogs

Bring it on. She has stated her view and we have stated ours.

9h Like Reply



Jessica Sheffield

cool.

9h Like Reply



People for Dogs

She had publicly stated her point and we have done the same.

9h Like Reply



Jessica Sheffield

except she didn't degrade anyone. this is childish

9h Like Reply



Write a comment...

