

April 18, 2011

To the Governor and the Members of the Missouri General Assembly:

We write to you today to outline an agreement on a pathway forward on a matter of tremendous importance to the state of Missouri: the care and treatment of dogs. This agreement is based on our shared belief that agriculture is the backbone of Missouri's economy; that responsible, professional dog breeders are a vital part of Missouri's agricultural industry; and that the welfare of dogs is of paramount importance.

When Missourians have to tackle tough issues, we come together to get things done. That is exactly what we have agreed to do on this complex issue. Together, we have worked through the details, found common ground, and forged a Missouri solution.

Today, we are pleased to submit for your consideration legislation that upholds the intent of Missouri voters concerning the treatment of dogs and incorporates legislative revisions necessary to ensure proper implementation. The agreement we have reached strengthens requirements for the care and treatment of dogs and protects Missouri agriculture.

Specifically, our legislation, which is attached to this letter:

- Strengthens standards for veterinary care that must be provided to dogs in breeding facilities;
- Strengthens standards concerning living conditions for dogs in breeding facilities, including access to sufficient food and clean water;
- Strengthens standards concerning the amount of space that must be provided for each dog, with sufficient time for the industry to meet this higher standard; and
- Strengthens state enforcement.

Combined with the considerable additional enforcement resources recommended in next year's budget, our agreement serves as a solid foundation for the future. In the coming months, we will build upon that foundation with greater collaboration and cooperation to advance the care and treatment of dogs in Missouri.

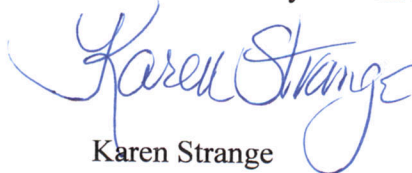
We are mindful of the voters' desire to address this important issue and the legislative efforts to do so, and we applaud all those who have worked to bring people together. Our organizations pledge to work with you to move our agreement through the legislative process swiftly, and we look forward to seeing it signed into law as soon as possible. We also pledge to continue our partnership to advance the care and treatment of dogs and to move Missouri agriculture forward.

We are proud to be working together on this critical issue for our state. We hope you will join us in these efforts.

Sincerely,



Kathy Warnick
Humane Society of Missouri



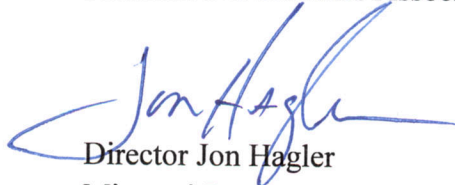
Karen Strange
Missouri Federation of Animal Owners



Bob Baker
Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation



Barbara York
Missouri Pet Breeders Association



Director Jon Hagler
Missouri Department of Agriculture

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Page 3

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Don Nikodim", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Don Nikodim

Missouri Farmers Care