

2/27/2019

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I, Larissa Watt, am offering testimony in regard to the proposed H.B. No. 5399.

I would like to support individuals, and businesses who are trying their best to make a living for themselves, though it needs to be done in a safe manner. As pet parents, it is our responsibility to decide who is the best fit to care for our animals, while we are away from home. This is similar to parents of human children, who hire a sitter for as date night, or even a nanny for long term care. In our own home, we can better regulate, health and safety measures, than in someone else's residence. Background checks, references, etc., fall on us, when hiring someone as a subcontractor.

When a pet is enrolled in a "doggy daycare", or boarded in a kennel, if they are licensed, we assume that they are following proper protocol, for hiring, monitoring employees, safety of animals, sanitation, and more. It is crucial that a facility with multiple dogs, in one area, have enough employees to monitor possible fights, as "pack mentality", can kick in, and animals may end up with severe injuries, or fatalities. Also, when housing multiple pets, outbreaks of illnesses can occur. Strict sanitation needs to be followed when running this type of facility. It is inevitable that illnesses and accidents will happen, but following strict guidelines will curb the rate of potential issues.

I am a bit weary of requiring licensing of every pet sitter. There are those who do this on occasion, for extra income, and/or because it brings joy to their lives. If we pursued this path, would we also bring forward legislation to require licensing of teen babysitters, or nannies, in families homes? Again, I feel it is important for anyone hiring a caregiver of people or pets, to take steps to ensure safety, to the best of their ability.

Moving forward, I am stating my concern, over those who operate unlicensed, "doggy daycares", and kennels, caring for multiple pets, out of their home. They should not be able to mimic, licensed dog boarding facilities, without being regulated. Without proper space, safety equipment, staff, and sanitation procedures, this is a ticking time bomb. It is more likely that a group of dogs will escape. Unleashed, groups of dogs, are more likely to cause harm to civilians. Unregulated, daycares, for humans, and animals, are dangerous. We have requirements in place, in an attempt to keep everyone safe, and healthy. I support the licensing of everyone who boards, multiple pets, as a business. I also support the requirement of a license number being displayed on advertisements, online, and on paper.

Submitted: 2/27/2019, Sincerely, Larissa Watt