



## NAIA Trust for the Protection of Animals, Animal Owners and Animal Enterprises

*Educating the Public about the Critical Difference between Animal Welfare and Animal Rights:  
Supporting Animal Welfare Using Common Sense, Science and Reason.*

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March 27, 2006

James E. "Jim" King, Jr., Chairman  
Commerce & Consumer Services Committee  
Room 416, Senate Office Building  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

To Senator King and committee members:

### **In re opposition to S 470, a bill to amend Florida law relating to the purchase of dogs and cats:**

The National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) is a national organization of animal owners and public, private and commercial organizations dedicated to animal welfare. We promote responsible animal ownership and support those who responsibly breed and sell pets. NAIA Trust deals with legislative matters affecting responsible animal owners and enterprises. NAIA and NAIA Trust members who reside in Florida have asked that we review and comment on S 470, the bill to amend the Florida law relating to dog and cat purchases.

S 470 fails on three counts: It prohibits responsible breeders from administering their own vaccinations and anthelmintics unless a veterinarian is on the premises; makes it more difficult for dog and cat breeders to defend themselves against specious or unprovable claims; and removes the option for pet buyers to waive certain provisions of the law.

Section 829.29 (1)(a) et seq: Administration of vaccinations and worming medicines are matters for breeders and their veterinarians to discuss and implement, but except for rabies inoculation, they need not be given by a veterinarian or require a veterinarian to be present when they are given to the animal. To require the physical presence of a veterinarian will unnecessarily raise the cost of puppies and kittens and interferes with the relationship between a pet breeder/seller and the veterinarian he depends on for animal care.

Section 829.29 (8): Some diseases have a variable incubation period and some buyers fail to follow instructions for puppy care, feeding, and wellness protocols. S 470 unfairly places all of the burden on the breeder/seller if illness or hereditary conditions occur regardless of the steps they have taken to prevent such problems and regardless of whether the buyer has followed instructions for pet care.

Section 829.29 (6): Deleting this section tells buyers that they are not competent to decide for themselves whether to buy a particular pet or to go elsewhere.

NAIA and NAIA Trust support the concept of consumer protection laws for pet buyers as long as they are enforceable and promote reasonable objectives and pre-sale consumer education.



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Consumers need protection from unscrupulous and irresponsible pet sellers. They should be protected from fraud, unsound business practices and the purchase of unhealthy animals. And, because most pet consumers are inexperienced in purchasing a dog, educational materials and disclosures should be made available prior to completion of the sale.

Attempts to mandate “perfect world” solutions aimed at protecting consumers from every conceivable problem miss opportunities to educate pet buyers before they purchase a pet, and they are often difficult to enforce. To be effective, lemon laws should reasonably reflect the obligations of both parties.

We ask that you vote against S 470 because it fails to protect sellers from specious claims, raises the cost of producing and selling puppies and kittens, and increases government presence in the veterinarian/client relationship that is critical to protecting animal welfare the freedom to make choices about animal treatment.

Sincerely,

Patti L. Strand, trustee