



NATIONAL ANIMAL INTEREST ALLIANCE

Supporting the people who care for America's animals

Representative, Dave Hunt
Co-Chair, Rules Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR, 97301

May 2, 2011

Letter in support of HB 3653

Dear Co-Chair Hunt:

I am writing on behalf of the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) in support of HB 3653, a bill that we hope will clarify the intent of the current EFU (Exclusive Farm Use) statute regarding dogs; namely that income-generating activities involving dogs are legitimate "farm uses" for land designated as EFU (Exclusive Farm Use).

Although many legislators and legal experts state that the current statute allows EFU land owners to employ their land for the income-generating dog activities offered in HB 3653, not all counties are interpreting it that way. As a result, some Oregonians have been seriously harmed, losing their livelihoods as well as their ability to provide the public with the wholesome dog activities they seek, and all for no logical reason. Dog activities have less impact on the land than many other species and are conducted in barns and other farm buildings, something that helps preserve the character of the land. Dogs have always played a big role in Oregon. Today, nearly 40% of Oregon households, both urban and rural, keep dogs. They serve as beloved household pets, service and therapy dogs as well as maintaining their more traditional roles; herding, protecting livestock and flocks, rooting out vermin, hunting, serving as draft animals and providing comfort and protection to farm families.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, organizations like the American Kennel Club (AKC) and 4-H have provided a bridge between rural and urban lifestyles by offering activities that enable people to maintain the human-animal bond and assure an ongoing understanding and appreciation of animals and husbandry. Dog training, sports and trials to test a dog's ability to do a particular job have been part of this tradition from the beginning and continue to this day. In Oregon, AKC events alone bring in more than \$18 million to the state economy each year. Many other clubs, organizations and businesses generate additional millions and veterinarians, trainers, pet supply stores and countless others benefit from the economic impact of dogs and dog activities.

Dogs were the first species to be domesticated and the species that enabled our hunter-gatherer ancestors to domesticate other species and settle into an agrarian lifestyle in the first place. Please support HB 3653 so that no matter how urbanized we become, dogs will always retain their special place on Oregon farms.

Thank you,

Patti Strand, Chairman

NAIA is a national animal welfare organization headquartered in Portland, Oregon that works to provide a balanced, fact-based approach to animal welfare issues based on the expertise and perspective of those who live and work with animals. NAIA's diverse membership includes dog and cat owners and organizations, farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, animal scientists, and sportsmen. We are pleased to have a sizeable membership in Oregon with active members in every county.