WILLIE NELSON

LUCK ★ TEXAS

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SUPPORT H.B. 3180 THE PUPPY MILL BILL

Dear Members of the Texas Legislature:

Growing up in Abbott, TX, I was taught to police my own area. When you see something is wrong, fix it. Well, something that needs to be fixed in Texas is the treatment of the dogs and cats in commercial breeding kennels or "puppy mills." Many states have enacted puppy mill bills requiring breeders to be licensed and to provide minimum standards of care. Texas is not one of these states, but common decency and the majority of Texans say we should be.

As it stands now these volume breeders are not accountable to basic humane standards by Texas laws. H.B. 3180 would require commercial breeders give dogs and cats fresh food and drinkable water; a home they can stand up and turn around in, exercise, and veterinary care.

We have all seen the news accounts of those puppy mills where companion animals are raised in crowded and unsanitary conditions. The suffering these dogs and cats have endured makes us all cringe. Often innocent people buying a puppy that comes from such a place will take home a diseased or dying pet. In fact, distemper and parvovirus are very common among puppy-milled dogs.

Another common symptom of the puppy mill environment is the lack of socialization, especially toward humans. Problems like extreme timidity or aggressiveness frequently result. And again, the animals and the people are the victims of this industry, an industry that is not held accountable. This is something we can fix.

H.B. 3180 does not affect the hobby breeders, those responsible breeders who have ten or fewer breeding females, or their facilities. The legislation only affects large scale commercial breeders.

I urge you to pass the Puppy Mill bill and make life better for thousands of dogs and cats and Texans. Those commercial breeders who already do the right things will applaud your efforts. Those who do not will no doubt complain and make every excuse. But excuses don't help and this legislation does.

Thanks,

Willie Nelson