

## TALKING POINTS TO USE WITH YOUR STATE SENATOR AND STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**Prop B is about dogs and dogs only.** Prop B is about improving standards of care and providing humane treatment for dogs. It is about nothing else. It does not address any other species of animals, does not impact agriculture, and will not affect hunting. Dogs are companion animals and man's best friend and they deserve the protections afforded them under Prop B.

**While there are laws on the books already, Prop B raises the requirements of care from *survival* standards to humane standards.** Current law contains only bare minimum standards. Under existing law a mother dog can legally be confined for her entire life in a tiny wire floor cage that only has to be six inches longer than the dog herself. Dogs currently can be warehoused in barns and sheds and confined in cages stacked one on top of another, never seeing the light of day. There are also serious loopholes in current law in reference to the basics of care, such as access to water and protection from temperature extremes. Most important, Prop B will for the first time require veterinary care for sick and injured breeding dogs. Prop B is simply about preventing cruelty to animals.

**There will be no significant increase in costs to enforce Prop B,** as there is already an enforcement mechanism set up to regulate dog breeders in Missouri. The Inspectors just need adequate standards of care to enforce, as established in Prop B, to ensure the humane treatment of dogs.

**Elected representatives from both sides endorsed and supported Prop B.** Prop B is not a Republican versus Democrat issue. Elected representatives from both sides endorsed and supported Prop B. The Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Act was endorsed by former U. S. Senator Jack Danforth. The wife of U. S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond, Linda, served on the Puppy Mill Reform Committee, which helped advance Prop B. Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster disagrees with attempts to repeal Prop B stating, "I felt it was reasonably well tailored to the target it was going after."

**Prop B will not put good dog breeders out of business; Prop B will actually help the responsible pet breeders in the state.** Responsible dog breeders already provide adequate space, exercise, protection from temperature extremes, and veterinary care for their dogs. The only commercial breeders that will go out of business are those that are looking to make a quick buck off of the dogs. Prop B merely ensures a level playing field for responsible breeders who believe in raising dogs humanely. Currently, the good, responsible breeders have to compete with less reputable breeders, who produce dogs as cheaply as possible, and thus drive down the price for good quality puppies. Prop B will also help restore credibility in puppies from Missouri and will reinvigorate the dog breeding industry in our state. The responsible breeders are negatively impacted by the bad publicity from the sick puppies sold by disreputable breeders who gave Missouri the moniker of "puppy mill capital of the U. S."

**Prop B is good for the dogs, good for small business, and good for the consumer.** The Better Business Bureau (BBB) recently released a critical report of the dog breeding industry in Missouri (link to BBB report). This report was due to the large number of complaints filed with the BBB over ill puppies originating from Missouri breeders. Prop B will help protect Missouri families who purchase puppies. Many families have to deal with expensive veterinary bills plus the heartbreak of caring for a sick or dying puppy. What was meant to be a joy for the whole family often turns into a nightmare. Families will now have more confidence in the health and quality of the puppy they are purchasing.

**Prop B would not be law without the assent of many voters from rural areas.** While Prop B was more popular in urban areas, it should be emphasized that 54% of the “yes” votes cast for Prop B, came from outside of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Kansas City, and Jackson County.

**The people have spoken; please respect the will of the people.** The mood of many voters this past election was “to return government to the people.” Any attempt to amend Prop B is a direct assault against this principal. The very first Section of the Missouri State Constitution reads, “That all political power is vested in and derived from the public; that all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.”

*Feel free to use any of the above points in your communications with your legislator. If writing to your legislator it is always best, if possible, to put it in your own words.*