EXHIBIT 35
DATE 2-21-13
HB 439

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

February 20, 2013

The Honorable Lee Randall, Chairman
Members of the House Agriculture Committee
Montana House of Representatives
Helena, Montana

Re. Oppose House Bill 439

Dear Representative Randall and Committee Members,

Many concerned responsible dog owners and breeders in Montana have contacted the American Kennel Club (AKC) regarding House Bill 439, which seeks to provide for registration, licensing, regulation and inspection of dog breeders. We respectfully request that the House Agriculture Committee consider the concerns of your constituent dog owners and the AKC and not advance HB439 as currently written.

The AKC's concerns include, but are not limited to:

- **Vague definition of "commercial dog breeder."** HB439 would define a "commercial dog breeder" as any person or entity who "possesses 11 or more intact female dogs over the age of nine months for the purpose of breeding or dealing in breeding dogs for direct or indirect sale or for exchange in return for consideration."
    - The bill does not indicate how "for the purpose of breeding" would be determined.
    - Under this vague definition, a person who possesses 11 intact adult female dogs and who sells a single puppy could be subject to commercial licensing and inspection requirements.
    - Because there is no time frame indicated, anyone who has owned or co-owned a total of 11 or more intact females over 9 months of age at any time, even if they are not currently breeding their animals, could be subject to regulation.

- **Inspections would be required for all buildings, property, and confinement areas in a single location used to conduct the "commercial dog breeding business."**
    - This could include private residences where dogs are kept.
    - Home-based hobby breeders registered and licensed as a commercial dog breeding business could find themselves out of compliance with local zoning codes.

The AKC and your constituent dog owners welcome the opportunity to work with you to ensure that the health and welfare of dogs in Montana will be protected without unreasonably and unnecessarily infringing on the rights of responsible dog breeders.

Sincerely,

Sheila Goffe
Director, Government Relations

Founded in 1884, the American Kennel Club (AKC) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit purebred dog registry dedicated to promoting responsible dog ownership, advocating for dogs as family companions, advancing canine health and well-being, and working to protect the rights of all responsible dog owners. The AKC represents more than 5,100 dog clubs nationally, including 20 clubs in Montana. In 2012, AKC licensed and sanctioned 100 events in Montana in which more than 16,000 dogs participated.

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