

The Greater Birmingham Humane Society's CEO, Allison Black Cornelius, was approached by local animal rights activist Angie Ingram to assist with the writing and passage of a puppy mill bill to introduce in the 2017 legislative session. Besides her full-time job as an attorney, Angie is the founder of the Alabama Puppy Mill Project and also volunteers as the Animal Welfare Program Director for Cavalier Rescue of Alabama. Angie and this rescue became very well known for their work to stop a puppy mill in North Alabama.

After a discussion with the Advocacy Committee of the GBHS board, Chaired by Jay Reed President of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), the GBHS board agreed to partner with Angie and begin this process. We have also contacted HSUS' Grassroots Coordinator, John Goodwin, for HSUS' support, advice and help. They have been very supportive.

It is the GBHS' belief that by starting with a bill of this nature (one that few could oppose especially in light of the fact that these businesses rarely if ever pay taxes and are almost never inspected), we could begin a process of healing and renewing relationships with Senators and House members. We believe building these relationships will help achieve a long-term goal of getting support for all of our work in the years to come.

GBHS and Cavalier Rescue of Alabama believes we need an early and less controversial win-win between animal welfare and our legislators to build the network we need to get improved policies in our field and to elevate their view of our profession and our causes' needs. Angie and I personally have very positive relationships with most elected officials in this state and I am sure many of you do as well. Let us use these relationships for the passage of effective policies that will curb over-population.

In an effort to assess our chances, we raised the funds to hire a well-known and respected lobbyist – highly recommended by several major corporations and law firms throughout the state. Graham Champion of Public Strategies, LLC, agreed to take our case. We are proud of his work as we have accomplished 3 major hurdles since August:

- Senator Priscilla Dunn (D) District 19, has agreed to sponsor the bill in the 2017 session,
- Auburn University has read the first draft, asked for a minor change, which we obliged, and
- ALFA does not oppose the legislation.

We would now like to ask for your support and invite you to become a part of this team and its efforts to get this bill passed.

If you have any questions about the bill or our efforts please contact
Allison Black Cornelius, CEO, GBHS at acornelius@gbhs.org or by telephone 205-907-0342
Angie Ingram, Founder, Alabama Puppy Mill Project: alpupppymillproject@gmail.com
205-746-8561
Ivana Sullivan, Chief Program Officer, GBHS, isullivan@gbhs.org or 205-942-1211