

## Introduction

House bill 1551 seeking to regulate dog breeders introduces new requirements, including the public disclosure of breeders' names and home addresses and the establishment of a dedicated department.

## Public Safety Concerns

Making breeders' personal information public presents serious safety and privacy risks. Publicly sharing this information exposes breeders and their families to potential harassment, theft, or other threats. According to the AKC dog thefts have increased nearly 40% since 2022, with many leading to violence. Unlike commercial entities, preservation breeders operate out of their home, making them particularly vulnerable. The proposed transparency comes at the expense of personal safety and privacy, setting a dangerous precedent for the treatment of law-abiding Marylanders.

## Financial and Practical Concerns

The establishment of a new government department regulating dog breeders would impose a substantial financial burden on the state. This investment is **unjustified** given the bill's limited impact on shelter overpopulation. Well-bred dogs from reputable breeders are placed in carefully vetted homes and are rarely surrendered to shelters. I have been in purebred dogs for over a decade and every breeder I know has a contract stating that all dogs sold by them are to be returned to them if surrendered. I know breeders who have flown or driven across the country, at their own expense, to reclaim surrendered dogs to prevent them from entering the shelter system. I **could** sit here for hours telling you all the ways I have watched responsible breeders keep their puppies off the streets, in their homes and out of shelters. The majority of shelter overpopulation stems from irresponsible ownership, abandonment, and puppy milling—not from the activities of preservation breeders, who would be disproportionately affected by this bill. Therefore, the department's ability to meaningfully reduce shelter intake rates is minimal, calling into question the efficacy of proposed house bill 1551.

## Questioning the Bill's Purpose

Additionally, the bill's intent is uncertain—is it curbing poor breeding, penalize breeders, or tackle shelter crowding. Ethical breeders already comply with strict regulations and incur high costs for animal welfare. Efforts should target irresponsible sources and educate the public on ethical breeders and rescues.

