

To Whom It May Concern:

I am submitting this letter to serve as written testimony in opposition of HB1551 to “Establish a Dog Breeder Accountability Fund.” In short, the bill puts an unnecessary financial burden on hobby breeders and does nothing to support ethical preservation breeding practices.

My name is Hayley Tamburello and I am a resident of Baltimore County. I have owned purebred dogs almost all of my life, starting first as a pet owner, later as someone who trained and competed in dog sports, and now as a new hobby breeder.

Approximately ten years ago, I purchased my first Clumber Spaniel, Pearl. The committee may not be familiar with the Clumber Spaniel breed. Although the Clumber Spaniel has been recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC) since 1878, there simply are not very many in existence. The AKC considers clumbers to be a “low entry breed” and The Kennel Club of the clumber’s native United Kingdom included the breed on the “vulnerable” list due to low numbers born and registered each year.

Without breeders, my beloved Clumber Spaniel would not exist.

There are no large-scale commercial breeders of Clumber Spaniels in the United States. The breed continues thanks to the dedicated work of small hobby breeders- people who have dedicated their lives to the preservation and furtherance of clumbers. Some of those breeders, myself included, would be directly negatively impacted by HB 1551.

As an active member of multiple purebred dog clubs, I witness all that goes into preservation breeding. When I became more involved in clumbers, I started participating in conformation shows and performance activities with my dogs. These events are not free, and each exhibitor contributes significant revenue back into the State. To get to the point of breeding a dog, I have paid thousands of dollars to other Maryland-based small businesses. I have attended training classes in Forrest Hill, Sykesville, and Reisterstown, competed in dog shows in West Friendship, participated in hunting activities in Mt. Airy, Poolesville, and Port Deposit, and attended breed-specific get-togethers in Walkersville and Finksburg. I do this both to evaluate my dog for breeding potential and to educate the public on clumber spaniels.

Hobby-breeding is never truly a money-making activity. The amount of money I have invested in my dogs could never be recouped through breeding. HB 1551 only makes the endeavour more difficult. My last litter produced seven beloved clumber spaniel puppies. HB 1551 would have added \$150 registration fee and \$50/puppy for a grand total of \$500 in extra costs. This is not my occupation. Five hundred dollars is a large added expense, and a financial burden to me.

HB 5115 would do nothing to combat any shelter over-crowding. Our standards and breeding practices do not impact any shelter overoccupied by pitbull mixes in my home of Baltimore County. Those animals are deserving of loving homes, but the clumber spaniel is not taking up crate space or resources at the SPCA or BARCS. By charging me a substantial amount of money, the State is punishing the wrong person for the sins of another.

Thank you for your time.