

Support Bills to Address Welfare Violations at Virginia Facility That Breeds Dogs for Experiments



During the USDA's July inspection, there were 5,035 beagle dogs and puppies caged in Envigo's sheds. The facility only employs about 25 people, not all of whom have husbandry duties, and breeds 500 puppies every month for experiments all over the world.

The Washington Post

USDA cites dog-breeding facility in Virginia for mistreating animals

By Dana Hedgpeth, The Washington Post, December 26, 2021



PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Dogs at a breeding facility in Cumberland, Virginia, owned by Envigo, that raises dogs and sells them as research animals

Tucker Carlson Tonight, December 28, 2021



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“Federal officials ... found dozens of animal welfare violations: records indicating that **hundreds of puppies had died of ‘unknown causes’** over a span of months; dogs’ food dispensers teeming with insects; and **reeking kennels with piles of feces**, urine and food underneath them. ... [O]fficials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] [cited](#) Envigo—an Indianapolis-based firm that breeds dogs and sells them as research animals to the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries—for **mistreatment of beagles and poor conditions** at the facility in Cumberland, Va., about 50 miles west of Richmond. ... According to inspection reports ..., authorities found more than 500 puppies and dogs kept inside a building and experiencing **‘discomfort, lethargy or stress’** because the temperature was above 85 degrees for at least five hours, and there was no air conditioning.

“[O]fficials ... also raised concerns about **infrequent cleaning in areas where dogs nursing puppies** could face possible disease and sickness. Flies, beetles and ants were found on self-feeders in some of the kennels. At least a dozen dogs had problems including **eye conditions, ‘severe dental disease’** and **inflamed paws**, according to the inspection reports. . . .

- Nearly **50 dogs had fight wounds**.
- **Food was withheld for 42 hours** from roughly a dozen female dogs that were nursing 78 pups.”

2022 SESSION BILLS

- **SB 87 (Sen. Stanley):** Dealers; prohibits sale of dogs or cats for experimental purposes
- **SB 88 (Sen. Stanley):** Breeders of cats and dogs; records of animals sold or transferred to animal testing facility
- **SB 90 (Sen. Stanley):** Breeders of dogs and cats for animal testing facilities; adoption of dogs and cats
- **SB 442 (Sens. Boysko and Stanley):** Breeding of dogs and cats for research; reporting
- **SB 457 (Sen. Boysko):** Breeding dogs for certain research prohibited; penalty
- **SB 535 (Sen. Marsden):** Oversight of research breeders; animal welfare oversight officer; animal welfare oversight advisory committee; civil penalty
- **SB 604 (Sen. Stanley):** Cruelty to animals; companion animals; penalty
- **HB 255 (Del. Simonds):** Procurement of dogs and cats for research
- **HB 1061 (Del. Shin):** Breeding of dogs or cats for foreign animal testing facilities prohibited; penalty

During a July 2021 visit to the facility, USDA inspectors found 26 violations—including 12 direct or critical ones—of the federal Animal Welfare Act. Direct and/or critical violations are offenses that have serious adverse effects on the health and well-being of an animal. These violations included the following:

- Numerous sick and injured dogs deprived of adequate veterinary care
- “[O]ver 300 puppy deaths ... attributed to unknown causes”
- Famished nursing dogs intentionally deprived of food (Some of these dogs were seen “reaching their front paws through the doors of the cages to reach the food in the top of their feeders” and “trying to scoop or dig out food from the feeders,” only to retrieve an occasional piece of kibble. One mother dog was observed “to be vigorously licking the back of the self-feeder, another was observed intently smelling the side of the feeder.”)
- Over the span of seven months, “71 dogs were injured when a body part (such as an ear or tail) was pulled through the wall of the kennel by a dog in an adjacent kennel and bitten.”
- A puppy was found in a tray under a cage, covered with feces and “huddled, depressed ... listless and quiet.” According to an Envigo manager, “[T]his puppy must have fallen into the tray during ... cleaning.”

The facility has been operating in the Commonwealth without state oversight since 1961.

Please support legislation to strengthen animal welfare laws, increase transparency and accountability, and prevent further animal suffering in our state.

For more information, please e-mail
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