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Attn: Ms Becky YU

24 February 2000

I should appreciate if you could ensure that this paper reaches the appropriate people for the meeting on the 25th February.

Re: Resolution under section 3 of the Dogs & Cats (Amendment) Ordinance etc..

To the Sub- committee:

Firstly, I am dismayed that I only received a copy of LC Paper No. CB91) 1027/99-00 after a telephone call from another ‘interested party’ in this issue & that no Govt Dept copied one to me earlier. Furthermore, to publish it so soon before today’s meeting, leaves little time to digest & respond. Surely interested parties should be on the distribution list and be informed of meetings.

Para 2: The AFCD seem to be back onto the statistics route again here. It should be remembered that only a fraction of 1% of these bites were serious *and* from ‘large dogs’.

Para 3. Whilst I am still opposed to the muzzling of large dogs in indoor public places and am glad that the Dept has seen fit to remove this part from their proposals it does seem odd that they are now going down a route of requiring leashing in public places. It is more likely that bites would happen in confined areas rather than in open public places! Neither are really justified *and the Dept has never given good reason to apply these measures.*

Para 4. The obedience test that will exempt well behaved dogs is still not available for examination by the public nor the sub-committee. It is being revised. However, once the issues on this resolution have been finalised it may well be too late to change any test requirements. Certainly the last test proposal would have resulted in probably all or many failures. The test must be passable for dogs whose owners are not Police dog handlers or professional trainers. Neither should it include a requirement for dogs not to show “an interest in other dogs .” *All dogs do that by their very nature and, in itself, does not mean that a dog cannot remain under control.* Neither does “tension on the leash” make sense.

Regarding having ample opportunity for dogs to be exercised off leash, this is simply not true. The new proposals only allow for this in Country Parks. Not every responsible dog owner has daily access to a Country Park. There are many open spaces, particularly in the New Territories, that are not designated Country Parks. It would no longer be possible to allow your dog to exercise free in these area..

Para 6. What is meant by the first sentence? (particular classes of dogs) Is this stating that dogs of a certain size are more predisposed to attacking than others!

If AFCD have trouble enforcing existing legislation, especially in villages, how will this new legislation help? Furthermore responsible dog owners are being penalised. Responsible owners are not those referred to in para 6. The police should be called to enforce existing laws if the AFCD staff are confronted by “angry villagers.” **This is not a good reason to introduce catch-all leashing legislation.**

Yours sincerely

P C Sanderson