



NAIA Trust for the Protection of Animals, Animal Owners and Animal Enterprises

Educating the Public about the Critical Difference between Animal Welfare and Animal Rights

September 17, 2008

Dear Florida pet owners:

Over the last few years, several Florida counties have adopted ordinances that seriously impact your rights as pet owners. These ordinances not only challenge the ability of responsible owners to keep and enjoy their pets, but also violate their basic constitutional rights by granting extraordinary police powers to enforcement authorities. So far, Dade, Palm Beach and now Volusia counties have passed these overreaching ordinances, and others are waiting in the wings.

The National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) and NAIA Trust, along with many others, provided information and evidence showing that such ordinances have never worked anywhere. We warned about the constitutional issues involved, but lawmakers could not be dissuaded from their course and voted to pass these ineffective and draconian laws. At this point, we feel that we have no alternative but to seek legal redress. Therefore we have committed to challenge these ordinances in court where necessary, and to begin a vigorous lobbying program in places where we think that they will be most effective. Based on the specific issues involved and advice from counsel, we have determined that our first suit will be brought against Volusia County.

With this lawsuit, we will put municipalities all over the country on notice: If you pass unreasonable ordinances, you will have to defend them from legitimate challenges. As elected officials, you have a responsibility to your constituents to educate yourselves before passing ordinances that contain no rational connection between the stated goal and the likely outcome, or imposing provisions that chip away at your citizens' most basic civil rights.

In order to prevail in this vitally important undertaking, NAIA Trust has convened a group of dedicated Floridians to pursue these problems in an intelligent, thorough way. The group includes the Florida Association of Kennel Clubs and several conscientious individuals who are members of kennel, cat and bird clubs and even wildlife associations. We have organized under the banner of NAIA Trust of Florida and have registered our name with the state.

As a pet owner and an American who is accorded basic rights under the US constitution, you have a stake in the outcome of this lawsuit, and our efforts as well. That's why we're writing you to ask for your help in overturning this ordinance. We need to win this suit and set a precedent that will enable us to defeat or prevent the establishment of similar ordinances in Florida and across the US. Lawsuits are expensive and we cannot achieve victory without your financial support.

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After careful consideration, we have hired the well-respected firm of Greenspoon Marder P.A., a firm with a strong reputation for success. Please be aware that NAIA and NAIA Trust have been asked to initiate a number of lawsuits in the past, but have always declined because the likelihood of success was not high enough to justify the risks involved. We do not believe this to be the case with the current ordinance. Nothing is certain in life and law, but we believe this is the right ordinance, the right law firm and the right time.

Please consider this issue at your next club meeting and urge your membership to donate to our legal fund.

Your personal donation at this time will jump start our mission, so I ask that you consider a generous contribution to NAIA Trust. Please click here to make a secure online donation today: <http://www.naiatrust.org/donationform.htm>

Please call me at any time for more information or for referral to supporters in Florida who are already working with NAIA Trust of Florida. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

John Connolly, President

Patti Strand, National Director

P.S. Please sign up for the NAIA Trust alerts and newsletter right away. They are your leading sources of timely information about what's going on in your back yard.

<http://capwiz.com/naiatrust/mlm/signup/>

<http://www.naiatrust.org/newsletter.htm>

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