As your constituent, I am keen to voice my concerns about commercial dog breeding, and urge you to attend the parliamentary debate on this issue in support of the points made in this letter.

Commercial dog breeding in the UK, commonly referred to as ‘puppy farming,’ has now reached epidemic proportions. It has existed unchecked for decades, during which time, it is estimated that hundreds of thousands of dogs and puppies have suffered and died in horrendous circumstances. Commercial breeding is an industry that’s responsible for untold animal and human suffering, often evades tax contributions and is known to fuel serious criminal activity.

- Puppy farm breeding dogs are often not afforded the ‘five freedoms’ of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 because this Act is a ‘power,’ not a ‘duty,’ of local authorities. As a result, these dogs are often forced to eat, sleep and give birth in the same barren enclosure in which they urinate and defecate. Not surprisingly, scientific evidence clearly states that puppies born in these establishments have an increased risk of health and behavioural problems, and it is widely known that many puppies die as a result of this.

- Thousands of unwanted healthy dogs are euthanised every year by councils across the UK, which is funded by the tax payer. Yet these same councils are issuing increasing numbers of licenses to puppy farmers for the purpose of breeding more dogs.

- There is compelling evidence that it has been a long-standing practice for many commercial dog breeders to spread industrial quantities of untreated dog waste on their pasture land. As a hazardous waste, this creates direct disease risks to livestock, particularly sheep and cattle, and as a result the potential for contamination of the human food chain.

In addition, water, contaminated by dog waste spread on fields, drains into rivers and streams posing a threat to wildlife. Regulation of the commercial dog breeding industry continues to be woefully inadequate and this has become a matter of considerable public concern, as evidenced by a recent petition where in excess of 100,000 signatures triggered a parliamentary debate due in September.

As your constituent, I hope that I can count on your support for this most urgent debate, as well as your recommendation for the following key actions:

1. Ban the sale of dogs through intermediary dealers, including pet shops.
2. Regulation that ensures puppies can only be sold in the presence of their natural mothers.
3. A Code of Practice for the breeding of dogs under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to include strict conditions for the keeping of breeding dogs according to the ‘five freedoms.’ (The ‘Standard for Breeding Dogs’ recently drawn up by the Advisory Council on Welfare Issues in dog breeding should be the basis for this.)
4. Compulsory registration of anyone breeding a dog and the requirement that this registration number must be quoted in any sales advertisements to ensure complete transparency and traceability.
5. The repeal and redrafting of dog breeding regulations to require that all breeders producing three litters or more in any year be licensed and subject to risk-based inspection.
6. Power given to local authorities to suspend or revoke licences directly without the requirement to prosecute.

You will shortly receive a Briefing Document from Naturewatch Foundation via email, which will explain each of the above points in more detail. Please read this document, as it provides further facts and figures to support the key points listed above in preparation for the parliamentary debate.

I feel very strongly about this matter and hope you will support the issues raised in this letter upon attendance of this debate.

Yours sincerely,

Date-----------------------------

Dear ...........................................................................................................................

RE: ATTENDANCE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE
ON THE BREEDING AND SALE OF PUPPIES IN September 2014.

Name ..........................................................................................................................

Naturewatch Foundation Supporter

Date.................................