

## ALLIANCE HELPS RID USDA OF PUPPY MILL LOBBYIST



*Julian Prager shown the door at USDA*

In an effort to further aid inhumane puppy mills, former USDA Deputy Administrator of Animal Care - Dr. Chester Gipson - two years ago hired a long-time puppy mill lobbyist and advocate, Julian Prager, to be USDA's "Canine Advisor." Mr. Prager's duties included assisting in the training of the USDA inspectors. Ironically, Mr. Prager had consistently opposed all laws regulating puppy mills and vigorously opposed Pennsylvania's new puppy mill law, and most recently, he fought against implementation of USDA's new regulations on puppy mill sales over the Internet. **Mr. Prager also opposed a law to prevent puppy mill operators from performing surgeries such as C-sections and debarking on their own dogs.**

Yet, this is the individual that Dr. Gipson hired to assist with enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), the law which regulates the same industry that Mr. Prager has served to promote and protect for several decades. It was no coincidence that shortly after Mr. Prager came on board, USDA made the decision to help puppy mills circumvent state and local laws restricting the acquisition of puppies by pet stores from breeders with violations of the AWA documented on their inspection reports.



*Julian Prager seated with AKC lobbyists. AKC allocated \$10,000 towards an unsuccessful attempt to overturn Missouri's new puppy mill regulations*

The Alliance has long complained to USDA officials that the Department was employing an apologist for the puppy mill industry to assist with the enforcement of the AWA, which regulates the same industry that Mr. Prager has served to promote for many years. Shockingly, even after landing a job at USDA Mr. Prager continued to lobby for the puppy mill industry on behalf of the AKC and the

National Animal Interest Alliance, two groups that consistently work against virtually all animal welfare laws and regulations.

**Recently, the Alliance came into possession of correspondence directly linking Mr. Prager to his ongoing lobbying efforts on behalf of animal users.** The Alliance subsequently exposed this ongoing conflict of interest, and such exposure has resulted in Mr. Prager's departure from USDA.

This success for the animals comes on the heels of USDA ousting Dr. Gipson and USDA's announcement to crack down on the cruel practice of soring show horses. We are cautiously optimistic that USDA is finally moving in the right direction for the animals.