



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### DOG ADVOCATE CHARGED WITH TRESPASSING AFTER PROVIDING STRAW TO UNDERWEIGHT DOGS CHAINED IN FREEZING TEMPS

Charges point to immediate need for stronger dog protection laws nationwide



February 2, 2010, Altoona, PA — Dog advocate Tamira Ci Thayne, founder and CEO of Dogs Deserve Better, a non-profit working solely on behalf of chained and penned dogs, spent the coldest night of the year sleepless despite being snug and warm in her bed.

The faces of dogs chained out in single-digit temperatures and sub-zero windchills haunted her, and she worried if these dogs would survive the night in their inadequate houses, many of which contained not even the single insulating element that could well save their lives: straw.

Determined to help local dogs, she rose early and, with another DDB volunteer, took straw, food, and water to some of the worse cases.

At 1492 Dulancey Drive in Lilly, Pennsylvania, Thayne spotted two skinny dogs with inadequate shelter, minimal straw, no food, and no water. She knocked on the door, and when no one answered she left a Dogs Deserve Better calendar and stuffed the doghouses with straw to save the dogs from immediate danger of death by freezing. She gave the dogs each a bone, food, and water. They shivered nonstop while they ate in the -11 degree wind chill.



The boxer mix had very short fur, a too-large doghouse with an opening as large as the dog, and every rib and bone in her back stood out starkly as she tried to decide whether to eat or run into her house for what little warmth it offered.

Current Pennsylvania law dictates that dogs must have access to "sustenance, drink, and sanitary shelter which will protect the animal against inclement weather and preserve the animal's body heat and keep it dry." Thayne knew the law was being broken, so she returned three days later to speak to the caretaker on behalf of the dogs.

Again, no one answered the door. She left a brochure and a note saying the doghouses were not meeting legal requirements, including her phone number in case they wanted help or to release the dogs to rescue.

As she gave the dogs treats and a pat on the head, a woman came out screaming at her to get off the property. She immediately left.

Two days later she received a call from a Pennsylvania State Police officer saying she was being charged with Summary Defiant Trespass. Under Pennsylvania law 18 Pa.C.S.A. §3503(b), a person commits the crime of defiant trespass if he or she comes onto or stays on your property AFTER being told to stay away.

However, Thayne had only been told to leave the property once, which she immediately did. She has not returned. She was informed by the State Trooper that the dog caretaker claimed she had told Thayne to leave twice. Thayne rebutted this statement, but the officer said it was her word against the owner's.

Thayne has a witness—the volunteer from the first day—who will testify in court that: 1. Although Thayne made a good-faith attempt to speak to the caretaker before taking action on behalf of the dogs, no one indeed answered the door, and 2. No one EVER asked them to leave the property on Sunday, January 3, 2010.

Thayne's report to the Cambria County Humane Officer brought no relief of the dogs' suffering. He had the guardians fix one of the doghouse openings, but never charged them with cruelty for inadequate housing, the underweight condition of the dogs, the lack of food and water, or leaving the dogs to freeze in sub-zero wind chills.

Thayne will be in district court on Main Street in Portage, Pennsylvania, at 9:30 a.m. on February 16, 2010 to defend against the bogus charges. She will be bringing photo and video evidence, and well as eye-witness testimony.

Thayne is asking all Pennsylvania residents to stand against this form of abuse by joining the coalition to Unchain Pennsylvania Dogs. The coalition seeks to pass HB1254, a bill setting time limits on chaining, and creating better conditions for Pennsylvania's dogs. Sign up today at [Unchainpadogs.com](http://Unchainpadogs.com).

Please visit the website at [DogsDeserveBetter.org](http://DogsDeserveBetter.org) to learn more about dog chaining, the reasons it is cruel to dogs and dangerous to humans, and to find a local area representative.

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