

# The Vizsla Club of America, Inc.



January 9, 2009

Gail Golab  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
ATTN: Animal Welfare Division  
1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100  
Schaumburg , IL 60173-4360

Ms. Golab,

The Vizsla club of America is the parent club for smooth coated Vizslas. We have a membership of over 1000, from every state in the union, as well as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Europe. We strive to do all in our power to protect and advance the interests of Vizslas, pointing breeds, and purebred dogs in general. Our goals include educating the public in regard to breeding, training, proper care, and maintenance of Vizslas. We also support and encourage research activities designed to improve the health and welfare of Vizslas and dogs in general. As an example, we are currently supporting epilepsy and lymphosarcoma studies.

We have recently been made aware of your change in policy concerning ear cropping and tail docking. We believe your categorizing these procedures as **cosmetic** is an extreme mischaracterization. Tail docking is done to help our breed perform its function safely and efficiently. Unlike the long tailed English pointer who is only required to find and point game in light cover, a Vizsla is a continental pointer. As such a Vizsla is expected to not only find birds in open country, but to also to track downed game, and retrieve it; no matter what the terrain or vegetation. As most sportsmen and veterinarians are aware, tail injuries in long tailed sporting dogs are quite common. Therefore calling for the elimination of tail docking from all breed standards shows a real lack of appreciation for the functions of these breeds, as well as actually increasing the odds of injury to many of the breeds such as the Vizsla, the German Short Hair Pointer, and the Weimaraner that still perform the function they were historically bred to perform.

Tail docking, when performed by a veterinarian, is very safe and virtually pain free. We firmly believe that we, jointly with our veterinarians, should have the right to decide in the proper care and treatment of our pets.

Sincerely,

J. I. Brennan  
Corresponding Secretary  
Vizsla Club of America