

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Health
Parrakeets
Parrots

May 27, 1937

Hon. Francis H. Friend
Skowhegan, Maine

Dear Francis:

I have been delayed in replying to your letter of May 21, because of my inability to discuss the points raised in your letter with Dr. Coombs who has been the State official handling the health regulations applying to Parrakeets. He has been in the office this morning and has told us a very interesting story concerning these birds and, after talking with him I am very sure I do not want any of them in my own house.

Dr. Coombs says that between 1928 and 1932, there were several cases of psittacosis, sometimes called parrot fever which is a type of pneumonia, in Aroostook County which were traced to these birds. In 1934, a shipment was received in Portland from California of 94 live and 4 dead birds. They were quarantined and 7 more of them died which were found to be affected with this disease. About the same time in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a consignment was received by a chain store, placed in cages for sale and there were 13 deaths from pneumonia in that store among the employees before the cause was traced to these birds. After considerable study of the question, the department of Health and Welfare issued a rule and regulation on February 28, 1934, effective March 1, 1934, which provided as follows:

"No person, firm or corporation shall sell or transport within the State of Maine birds belonging to that branch of the psittacine family known as parrakeets or love birds, provided that the transportation of such birds, which are apparently well and were received in the State of Maine before January 20, 1934, shall be allowed.

Any person, firm or corporation now owning, or having in his possession, any parrakeets or love birds which have been brought into the State of Maine within the past six months, shall report at once to the State Bureau of Health any sickness which may occur among such birds."

This regulation is still in effect and, as you will notice, provides that these birds cannot be sold or transported within the State.

I trust that this answers the question which you asked in your letter. If not, I shall be glad to enter into the matter further with you.

Very truly yours,

Franz U. Burkett
Attorney General