



HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGIE IN THE WINDOW? SUPPORT BILLS 5804, 5801



In Support of :

Proposed Bill # 5804 An Act Concerning Dogs and Cats Sold In Connecticut and  
Proposed Bill #5801 An Act Prohibiting The Sale Of Dogs Obtained From Puppy  
Mills

HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGIE IN THE WINDOW?

The price is higher than anyone could imagine. Let's itemize the bill:

ITEM—HOUSING: Housing for puppy mill dogs is typically small wood and wire cages or crates, kept outdoors in any weather, and sometimes stacked up. Breeders are stingy with food, water and medical care barely supplying enough to keep any dog alive.\*\*\*

ITEM---THE BREEDING STOCK DOGS: Female dogs are kept perpetually pregnant, are typically undernourished, and veterinary care is only for emergencies. They eat, live and relieve themselves in the same breeding cage for their whole lives. Fed and bred, as the saying goes. When they are spent at age 6 or 7, they are killed or sold to research labs. \*\*\*

ITEM---SOME LIVING CONDITIONS OBSERVED AND REPORTED BY USDA

INSPECTORS: Surgery on dogs with no anesthesia, including ear cropping and tail docking, open lesions on dogs, fly covered dogs, yellow ooze around eyes, waste and excrement up to the cages from down below, severe smell of feces, skin problems, hair loss, no bedding in temperatures as low as 30 degrees, animals visibly shaking, Lab with pups, so thin her ribs were visible, no fresh food, severe rodent and pest problem, matted dogs, water pans with green water and floating gunk, frozen water pans, no water in high heat, bloody stool, malnutrition, below standard food, living in feces and filth, injuries from legs and feet falling through the wire floor, timid, ferocious or non responsive personalities from lack of any human touching or socialization, overcrowding and too small cages. \*\*

ITEM--- COMMON HEALTH CONSEQUENCES AFFLICTING PUPS AND ADULT DOGS

FROM LIVING IN PUPPY MILLS: Deafness, epilepsy, cataracts, eye lesions, retinal degeneration, glaucoma, ear infections, parvovirus, mange, dermatitis, dislocated kneecaps (in small dogs), heartworm, kennel cough and pneumonia, giardia (gastrointestinal infection), worms and parasites, kidney and liver problems, muscle and bone pathology, hip dysplasia, retardation, seizures, and neurological impairment (from inbreeding), periodontal disease, reproductive organ tumors, personality disorders. \*\*\* and \*\*

ITEM---THE PUPS: Born in the breeding cages, they are taken from the comfort of their mother at four to eight weeks old, sold to brokers and packed in crates to be shipped to pet stores. Pups go from cages at the breeder to cages at the broker to cages on the truck to cages at the pet store. That's their childhood. When they are bought, they learn to bond and belong for the first time in their lives. Many arrive with or become ill with diseases listed above and, if the state has a lemon law, they may go back to the pet store--- back to the cage---returned--- thrown away by the family they learned to love and trust. These sick and heartsick little pups are then given back to the broker or killed.

ITEM---HUMAN HEARTBREAK: If their human family has learned to love their canine baby, they may try to make him well. Puppy mill pups don't respond well to medical treatment, and often a human family will spend thousands to save their little pet, only to lose him in the end. The cost is high, the sadness is profound, children are heartbroken.

ITEM---SACRIFICE OF SHELTER DOGS: Breeders contribute to the already bloated dog overpopulation. While we breed dogs by the thousands, millions are waiting behind bars on death row, their only crime is being born. For every dog milled, another is killed.

The cost of puppy mills is high indeed-- to the dogs, to the puppies and to the humans who buy them and love them only to watch them sicken and die, and to all the dogs doomed to death because of contributing to an already overpopulated dog society.

#### THE LAW

Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Ohio and Pennsylvania are the major puppy mill states. But you can find them in any state, and anti cruelty laws are rarely enforced in those rural areas where most puppy mills are located.

The AWA specifies minimal care standards, which are enforced by the USDA. A breeding kennel can legally keep hundreds of dogs with minimum basics of food, water and shelter. The AWA requires licensing, but only large scale commercial facilities that breed or broker animals for resale to pet stores are required to be licensed and inspected, they are considered "wholesale." Those that sell directly to the public are not regulated under the AWA or any federal standards. Violators are rarely fined, and repeat offenders renew their licenses again and again. Puppy mills can successfully navigate around these laws by either selling directly to consumers or simply avoiding the reach of law enforcement which consists of inadequate, very intermittent USDA inspections and minor fines. \*\* Most breeder's, even sued by the state continue to have their licenses renewed, and rarely is a kennel permanently closed. If closed by the state, they take their USDA license to another state and set up business. \*

Many of these large commercial breeders are backed by organizations whose revenue depends on mass breeding. The AKC is one of those, as a good portion of AKC registration fees come from commercial breeders. There is, therefore a mutually friendly relationship between the two, and AKC spends about 2% of income towards researching the health of purebred dogs. \*\*\*Another organization is the ACA (American Canine Association) which purports to "track the genetics of canines for defects and strengths". It is, in fact, another run-of-the-mill registry begun by kennel owner Robert Yarnell, Jr., himself cited for breeding and selling animals with hereditary problems resulting from inbreeding. \*

It seems obvious that new state laws are needed which will impose strict and specific guidelines and oversight for the care of dogs in kennels or any selling site.

Consumers should be able to accurately track the origin of any cat or dog sold in the state, and be aware of the dangers of internet and newspaper sales of pets.

Although as much as \$300 may be added to the price of a pup with AKC "papers", consumers should know that the AKC is merely a registry for purebred dogs, not a health certificate, and they have in the past accepted registration fees from some of the worst puppy mills in the country.

\*Source: [www.NJCAPSA.ORG](http://www.NJCAPSA.ORG) and the Archives of:  
The New York Times, The New York Post, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Pittsburgh Press

\*\*Source: Humane Society of the United States

\*\*\*Source: Last Chance for Animals

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# Puppy mills a national disgrace

BY KEN BERNHARD

The mass breeding of puppies that are ultimately sold in pet stores generates outrage among pet owners, animal lovers and many concerned citizens, but the general public and most lawmakers have not sufficiently reacted to the issue. Videos on television and the Internet, as well as many newspaper accounts, have exposed the puppy mill industry, which involves the mass breeding of dogs in stacked, cramped wire cages, without proper shelter or care surrounded by piles of animal waste and filth. It is unquestionably animal cruelty but it has survived because the applicable laws are weak and ineffective.

Puppy mill operators run their businesses in hidden quarters with as little publicity as possible, but it is a hundred million dollar (plus) industry. Somewhere between 2 to 4 million puppies are produced by more than 10,000 commercial breeders, many of which, if not most, are puppy mills. In Missouri alone there are more than 1,000 licensed commercial kennels, a few of which have more than 1,000 breeding dogs. The breeders have little or no incentive to provide proper care for the breeding dogs; their only interest is with the inventory of cute, saleable puppies. The breeding females spend their entire lives in substandard conditions with no human contact. These adult dogs suffer terribly from psychological problems resulting from years of neglect, abuse, and confinement. When these operators are exposed and cited for maltreating their dogs, they simply pay small fines, pro-

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vide nominal care, or shut down one operation and begin another one. One operator in Pennsylvania, when recently told that he must provide veterinary care for the 80 dogs hidden in his barn that were found with fleas, open sores, and rotting teeth, decided to shoot them instead. There may not be much we can do in Connecticut to prohibit what is tolerated in other states, apart from not providing a market for the purveyors of this cruelty, but our legislators should take a look at strengthening laws on kennels and animal sales in our state. Nothing in state law covers what happens in an out of state puppy mill before

an animal arrives in Connecticut. That is left up to the state of origin and to federal agriculture officials. While an animal sold in Connecticut may have no outward signs of disease, that is no proof that the animal has been bred, fed and handled in a humane manner and almost assuredly, the breeding dogs have been mishandled and abused. A local group I represent called the Westport Coalition against Puppy Mills is especially active in raising awareness about pets coming from out-of-state puppy mills. More information is available at its website, [www.stopuppymills.org](http://www.stopuppymills.org), [www.animallawinfo.com](http://www.animallawinfo.com).

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