



**TESTIMONY OF PET INDUSTRY JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT
HOUSE BILL 5118**

February 22, 2010

As the world's largest pet trade association, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) appreciates the opportunity to offer our views on HB 5518. We had the privilege of testifying before this committee last year concerning statutory requirements for pet stores, and working with the committee to ensure that effective legislation was crafted. As this committee is aware, PIJAC represents the interests of all segments of the pet industry throughout the United States, counting among its membership various associations, organizations, corporations and individuals involved in the commercial pet trade. More specifically, we represent pet breeders, pet product manufacturers, distributors and retailers throughout Connecticut, many of whom would be directly impacted by this legislation.

In our decades of representing the pet trade, both here in Connecticut and across the many states, PIJAC has actively sought to advance both the welfare of pet animals and the protection of the pet owning public. We are sensitive to the interest in identifying the origin of puppies sold through pet stores, and committed to ensuring the retention of this information in an efficient and effective manner. Accordingly, PIJAC supports the bill before you today, but believes two minor amendments to this legislation will eliminate ambiguity in the law.

As PIJAC noted when amendatory language was being evaluated last year for Senate Bill 499, Section 22-344(d)(a) of the Connecticut Code already provided for the posting of signs in pet stores containing information about individual dogs for sale. As this committee knows, SB 499 amended a different section of the Code, Section 22-354(b), concerning the provision of identifying information to consumers through a certificate of origin.

It is this certificate of origin that is the subject of the current bill. Having worked with the committee on this language, we respectfully suggest that there was never an intent that two separate notices be required, providing the same information. This could easily be clarified by stating in Section 22-354(b) that all "such information contained in the certificate of origin" must be included in the signage required by Section 22-344, thereby fulfilling the requirement of Section 22-354.

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PIJAC believes that the change proposed by this bill makes eminent good sense, that information contained in the certificate supplied to customers be retained by the pet shop and made available to the Department upon request. Indeed, many pet stores already retain such information. Again, however, we propose a clarifying amendment; that the content be retained by the pet store in either electronic or paper form, at its discretion, and that the information be available to the Department in this form upon the Department's request. This would ensure the most efficient approach to fulfilling the statutory standard.

With those modest amendments, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, PIJAC endorses the adoption of House Bill 5118.

Thank you greatly for your consideration of our concerns!

Respectfully Submitted,

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Vice President of Governmental Affairs and General Counsel
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council

**AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN FOR DOGS SOLD BY PET SHOP
LICENSEES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 22-354 of the 2010 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

(a) Any dog or cat imported into this state shall be accompanied by a certificate of health issued no earlier than thirty days prior to the date of importation by a licensed, graduate veterinarian stating that such dog or cat is free from symptoms of any infectious, contagious or communicable disease, and that such dog or cat, if three months of age or older, is currently vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian. A copy of such health certificate shall be forwarded promptly to the commissioner from the livestock sanitary official of the state of origin. Any dog or cat originating from a rabies quarantine area shall have permission of the State Veterinarian prior to importation into this state. No person, firm or corporation shall import or export for the purposes of sale or offering for sale any dog or cat under the age of eight weeks unless such dog or cat is transported with its dam and no person, firm or corporation shall sell within the state any dog or cat under the age of eight weeks. Any person, firm or corporation violating the provisions of this subsection or bringing any dog or cat into this state from an area under quarantine for rabies shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both.

(b) Any dog sold or offered for sale by a pet shop licensee in this state shall be accompanied by a certificate of origin, in a form established by the pet shop licensee or supplied by the Department, identifying the name and address of the person, firm or corporation that bred such dog and of any person, firm or corporation that sold such dog to such pet shop licensee. Such information contained in the certificate of origin shall be posted in a conspicuous manner not more than ten feet from the location where such dog is displayed for sale, on the sign provided for in Section 220344(d)(a). No information other than that required by Section 22-344(d)(a) and by this section need be posted. A copy of such certificate shall be provided to the purchaser of such dog at the time of sale, and shall be filed by such licensee with the Department of Agriculture not later than two days after such sale. For a period of not less than one year after the date of issuance, each pet shop licensee shall retain the information contained in the certificate of origin supplied to a purchaser in electronic or paper form copy of any certificate of origin issued by such pet shop licensee to a purchaser. During such one-year period, each pet shop licensee shall make such information electronic or paper copy available for inspection by the Department of Agriculture upon request by the department. No pet shop licensee shall purchase a dog or cat for resale from a breeder or other person, firm or corporation located outside of this state that is not in possession of a current license issued by the United States Department of Agriculture and any applicable state agency. Any pet shop licensee violating the provisions of this subsection shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both, for each violation. Each day a pet shop licensee is in violation of this subsection shall constitute a separate offense.