

Topic: Opposition to Senate Bill 397

~An act concerning puppy mills and the origin of other potentially
sick dogs imported into this state.~

Speaker: "Puppy Pete" PETER NOEL, owner of Gentle Jungle Pet Stores in Waterbury, Ct and Meriden Ct.

In the community, I am know as and called "Puppy Pete," From the old guys basketball league, local schools, restaurants, etc, that is who I am, "Puppy Pete." My father opened his first pet store in Waterbury, Ct in 1969. For the past twelve years I have owned Gentle Jungle Pet Stores in the Waterbury Mall. Two years ago, I also opened in the Meriden Mall. Being born and raised into the puppy and pet industry, I *love* animals very much! I know more about puppies than virtually anyone. I would love to help the committee to improve the pet industry and issues concerning sick puppies.

My stores have placed over 19,000 puppies and 4,000 kittens in the past twelve years. We obey every law and our warrantee is in some ways even better than the Pet Lemon Law passed last year. I paid Southbury Vet Hospital over \$80,000 last year to care for all of my animals, because it is *the right thing to do*. I object to this bill on several levels:

- 1.) Why do you always pick on Pet Stores? Pet stores only provide approximately 10 % of all puppies placed in the state. What about breeders, shelters, rescue groups and for profit sellers that truck puppies up from southern states? In many ways as a good person in the industry, I supported the Pet Lemon Law passed last year to protect the consumer in purchasing a puppy from a pet store or breeder. Last minute for some mysterious reason the breeder was exempted from the law and the Lemon Law became only pertinent to Pet

Stores. In Connecticut if you buy a puppy from a breeder and it is dead tomorrow to bad for you! Why? This is not right for anyone.

- 2.) In the past twelve years, having placed over 23,000 puppies and kittens as well as thousands of bunnies, ferrets, parrots, etc, I cannot be Mother Nature or God – animals do get ill despite the best care. You would imagine I would have several hundred complaints. Better Business Bureau had recorded two complaints out of 23,000 pets sold, one complaint did not even concern the purchase of a pet. Please speak to Ray Connors at the *Department of Agriculture* who has been an animal control inspector for over 20 years and most recently in charge of all inspectors in the state. He has lived it “ front lines” for 20 years. He will tell you that Pet Stores are not the Problem. Breeders and other organizations are the problem many times over.
- 3.) What is a “ Puppy Mill?” Are all out of state breeders Puppy Mills? Is a private breeder in Danbury with 19 adult Yorkies in a small kennel a “ Puppy Mill?” Is a Labrador Retriever breeder east of Hartford where every puppy ends up with bad hips a “ Puppy Mill?” Is a private breeder in Waterbury with 14 adult German Shepherds in her basement a “ Puppy Mill?” Does a woman in Naugatuck who only has one adult male Beagle and three adult female Beagles in her quite nice home qualify as a “Puppy Mill,” since she breeds her three female Beagles every six months like they are baby machines for profit? Pet stores do not have to go out of state if they want to get sick dogs. How is the customer protected against these unethical breeders in Connecticut, who sell direct to the public?

In summary, I am proud to be Puppy Pete. I provide a great service. Where can the customer go with their children to view, play with and enjoy over sixty healthy, vet checked, warranted puppies than at my Pet Store? Buyer Beware! Don't go to the breeder, for if the puppy is dead tomorrow to bad for you! Go to Puppy Pete's Gentle Jungle Pet Store. Pete is already heavily regulated and even if he wasn't, he would still do *the right things* for the animals and the customer.

Thank you for your time,

Pete Noel
"Puppy Pete"
Gentle Jungle Pet Store
3/12/10
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