

**Testimony Concerning House Bill 5027**  
**March 12, 2013**

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of HB 5027, a ban on the sale of puppy mill dogs from pet shops.

I am a registered voter in Meriden, a volunteer and supporter of Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary and a member of Connecticut Votes for Animals.

The hearts of countless families are broken every day due to purchasing a puppy mill dog from a pet shop. Not only are their emotions drained, but in many cases, their finances as well. This is what results from purchasing a puppy from a pet store. A puppy mill is a commercial dog-breeding facility that focuses on increasing profit with little overhead cost. The health and welfare of the animals is not a priority. Puppy mills will breed a female dog every time she is in heat. For instance, a five-year-old dog could have given birth to 10 litters of puppies. In puppy mills, animals can spend most of their lives in cramped cages, with no room to play or exercise. Often times, the water and food provided for the puppies is contaminated, crawling with bugs. Puppies can even be malnourished. Puppies in mills are found with bleeding or swollen paws, feet falling through the wire cages, severe tooth decay, ear infections, dehydration and lesions on their eyes, which often lead to blindness. Almost all pet store animals come from puppy mills. At time of purchase, consumers are given incorrect lineage about the dog's health, breed and breeder. Every year, retail pet stores across America sell 500,000 dogs, while 5 to 7 million dogs enter shelters. Most puppy mills have no veterinary care, climate control or protection for the animals from weather (hot, cold, rain, or snow). With limited or no regulations or enforcement, puppy mills have no cleanup control. This means that dogs can be living in urine and feces for indefinite periods.

Without change, unknowing people will continue to purchase puppies from pet stores, thus perpetuating the puppy mill business.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

*Gina M. Hoag*

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