

I am in favor of legislation to prohibit the sale of commercially-bred dogs in new pet shops.

I am also in favor of a 5 year phase-out of the sale of commercially-bred dogs in the Connecticut pet shops that still sell them.

You have heard and no doubt read about the cruel conditions found in out-of-state puppy mills. The few stores that are selling these animals will tell you that they only do business with reputable breeders. But they will also admit that this abuse occurs in the industry but they don't support it – of course.

But they will admit that this business is about making a living and maximizing income revenue. Which means that the cheapest dogs would naturally come from the largest dog farms spending the least amount of money on the breeding process.

The industry will tell you that they support proper care of these dogs. And I don't disagree that they do care and they probably do believe they are doing no wrong buying puppy mill dogs. But what they are doing is supporting a breeding industry whose only goal is to produce the cheapest product with the least amount of care. The neglect of these animals takes place behind distant doors. Conveniently out of sight and out of mind.

But these few puppy stores have an option to forge a profitable working relationship with animal shelters that frequently euthanize many of their dogs.

But the industry will tell you they will then be in competition with the animal shelters who transfer dogs directly to families for a small fee. These differences can be worked out to the benefit of the puppy stores.

Every time a solution is proposed, the industry finds an excuse to reject it.

The industry will tell you that they need the extra income from the sale of these animals and that jobs will be lost. You always hear these kinds of excuses. We heard it about minimum wage and we heard it about Obama-care.

Jobs will not be lost. Pet stores sell a variety of accessories where the profit margins are at maximum.

The industry will complain that it is important to maintain the revenue stream and they will tell you that they cannot survive without this revenue.

I recall another industry who made the same argument. They said that the family businesses would collapse if the status quo was not maintained. They argued that their live stock was well taken care with plenty of food and adequate shelter.

This industry was a farming community of planters and their main crop was cotton and their income was maximized by slavery.

And they could never figure out what was wrong with it. Because it was so profitable.

The breeding industry enslaves animals. Store owners who sell dogs only see a wagging tail. And those cotton shirts that folks wore in the 19th century didn't much care where the cotton came from.

I appeal to your conscience and to the morality of this issue. Please, cut through the bull that comes from 16 stores. Think – 16 stores want you to maintain a system that perpetuates this neglect and abuse.

In the spirit of compromise, if you need to extend a 5 year phase out to ten years, please do it. If you lead, other states will follow. We did it with gun control. We can do it with this. Please don't support the out of state puppy mill industry that continues to neglect these dogs.