

My name is Debbie Purchia. I reside in Meriden, CT. I own an all natural pet supply store in Milldale, CT called Pet Playhouse, which has been a successful business for 9 years. I do not now and have never sold animals of any kind. It is my belief that a successful pet store should focus on the health and well-being of all animals, and not base its income nor operations on cruelty and greed such as we see with those selling pets from a puppy mill.

My store has always been rescue friendly and I work very hard with local organizations to save the lives of animals waiting in kill shelters to die. I have sponsored many adoption events resulting in homeless animals being placed into good homes rather than being purchased at a pet store. Too many puppies are bought on impulse and surrendered into the shelter system a short time later to await their fate. This is especially true around the holidays. I have found that adoption days and fundraising events for rescues and animal related organizations help to increase traffic in the store not only on those days, but help to form repeat business relationships with customers who feel a sense of loyalty and who appreciate the ethical, humane and community-minded atmosphere that they are rewarded with for their patronage .

It is my hope that you will vote to ban the sale of puppy mill puppies in the 16 stores within the state of Connecticut that carry them, allowing the focus to shift to placing shelter animals rather than perpetuating the suffering of the dogs in mills who are forced to reproduce without the benefit of any kind of quality of life. I fully support Connecticut Votes for Animals in their efforts and applaud them for their tireless work to change and improve the lives of animals. Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to share my experience with you.