



February 4, 2019

TESTIMONY OF LAURA "PEACH" REID ON BEHALF OF PET INDUSTRY JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 21 BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

As an organization with a core mission to advance the welfare of animals, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB 21, AN ACT CONCERNING THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS IN MUNICIPAL ANIMAL SHELTERS.

My name is Laura "Peach" Reid. I'm the President and CEO of Fish Mart, located in West Haven, Conn. For 45 years, we have been a wholesale distributor of aquatics and companion animals to retailers throughout the Northeast. For many years, I have been an advocate for the responsible pet industry, not only at my business, but as a member of PIJAC. I am now Chair of the Board of Directors of PIJAC, and speaking today on behalf of our organization.

As part of the well-regulated responsible pet trade, which combines industry best practices with state and federal standards, PIJAC understands the value of high quality pet care and consumer transparency. Just as we supported legislation several years ago that mandated the Department of Agriculture to require animal importers to register with the state and other regulations, last year we were happy to support HB 5282, which concerned the renewal of this task force. We see the renewed work of this task force as a continuation of the state's efforts to ensure that all companion animals are treated well throughout the state, which is why we are supportive of its continued mission in SB 21.

You may have read the recent articles regarding mistreatment of animals in shelters and rescues in our state. Undoubtedly there are more incidents of substandard care like this. It is our duty to ensure that ALL providers of pets to the public be either licensed or regulated, held accountable to written standards of care, and inspected by knowledgeable and trained officers. The charge of this task force would allow it to make recommendations that would help to prevent more incidents of animal mistreatment in the future. The animals we bring into our homes as companions deserve well-regulated, attentive treatment from those who care for them, no matter where they come from. **We encourage the task force to complete its charge as quickly as possible so that animals across the state are taken care of properly.**

Further, we hope the task force will recommend that shelters report annually to the Department on the number of dogs and other pets handled throughout the calendar year, consistent with the regulations on other importers. These species-specific reports should include the source and medical history of the pets as well as whether they were adopted or transferred out, and should be made readily available to consumers.

We at PIJAC feel that all caregivers should be held to the highest standard of care when interacting with animals. We look forward to collaborating with the task force as these important efforts move forward.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

*Peach Reid*

Laura "Peach" Reid  
Chair, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council