



All Pets Club™

"Turning the key to a new generation of pet care"

Testimony of Ed Foucault
All Pets Club
To the Legislative Task Force (Special Act 13-10)

Sen. Duff, Rep. Kupchick and members of the task force:

My name is Ed Foucault. I co-own and operate four pet stores in Connecticut called "All Pet's Club." I have been in this business for 24 years.

Our slogan is "bringing families closer together"—and we do that each and every day by entertaining, educating and linking families with the quality, healthy pets they want.

We are dedicated to the well-being of our puppies.

The topic tonight is: "Ways to improve the puppy industry and to ensure healthy animals in Connecticut." Here are my thoughts.

1. Let's work together.

Connecticut allows for various sources to import into the state. Pet stores buy from USDA regulated breeders. Other importers have sources that at this time we have no knowledge of where they come from except the state. Let's work together to put substandard breeders out of business while still allowing the good standing breeders to breed puppies and sell them to stores like my own; and work together to better understand the source and background of the other imported animals. I believe all dogs, puppies and cats imported into the state from any source should be vet check within 48 hours after arrival as we do to ensure their health.

2. We need to define our terms.

I hear about "puppy mills"—another word for bad breeders.

But sometimes it sounds like certain people say any commercial breeder is inherently a puppy mill. I don't agree with that. There are many commercial breeders who do an outstanding job with their kennels for the care, health and humane treatment of their animals.

Why would we put a good breeder out of business or prevent them from selling a puppy to my store?

We must all come to terms and agree on the definition of a puppy mill, which is often a very controversial and misunderstood term.

3. Let's be fair.

I also hear that some people think there is something inherently wrong about people getting a puppy from a pet store. I think that is a faulty argument.

I am proud to say that all our current kennels have no violations and we continue to put pressure on them to stay operating this way.

If I buy a puppy from a very good breeder ... and if I take care of that puppy in a loving way and keep it safe and in a clean environment until a family comes into the store and tells me, "we want that puppy to be part of our family," and we work with them to make sure a pet is a good fit for them... then what is wrong with that?

Let's be fair. Other importers besides pet shops that report to the state "adopt" or sell more puppies than pet shops in CT, by more than a 2 to 1 margin. But many or most of these puppies can and do come from backgrounds that are no healthier than pet shops.

In closing, my hope is that the Task Force will come to a consensus on steps that can be taken to ensure that ALL puppies coming into the state and bred in the state are raised in a humane manner as set forth by our government. But the solution is NOT to prohibit stores like mine from selling puppies. Remember, only pet shops in CT are already heavily regulated as to the health, medical and breeding history, as well as customer warranties. Banning the sale of puppies by pet shops will just drive a regulated and inspected industry underground, to unregulated and untaxed economic activity. Let's all work together to support and improve the good pet shops, good breeders, good rescues and shelters.

Thank you
Ed Foucault