

Kess, Quinn

From: Karen Mickley-Gomez [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2013 5:17 AM
To: CTPS
Subject: Fwd: Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs in CT

I am writing in support of banning the sale of cats and dogs in pet stores in Connecticut.

Our country euthanizes nearly 3 million dogs and cats a year in shelters, not because shelters are abominable or the animals are sick or unadoptable - but because they are not adopted within the short time allowed, and space is limited. It is unconscionable to buy a puppy or kitten when there are so many available pets, and also when the majority of pet store pets come from unspeakable conditions.

We have two dogs from shelters, and one dog from a puppy mill. The dog whose offspring were all sent to pet shops was adopted after her after the puppy mill was shut down and the dogs recovered by a rescue organization. After 10 years in cocker spaniel rescue, I thought I had seen most possible scenarios. This was beyond anything I could imagine. Matted fur so stiff this dog could not see or walk. Visible parasites. And terror.

This was not benign neglect, a happy dog in a loving home who was overdue for a nail clipping. This was a dog under 3 years old, living in stacked cages in a North Carolina chicken coop, who had already been forced to have nearly a dozen litters of puppies. She had been bred repeatedly (not a remotely "natural" phenomenon in breeding mills), and she had never ever been outside a cage apart from those purposes.

Our vet was certain she had an overactive thyroid because her eyes bulged so far out of her head. Testing determined that she was suffering from terror, not from a pathologic disease process. It took a year before she would leave the house without shaking and lying on the ground, trying to cover her head with her paws. Another before I could introduce her to another dog or person without the same result.

7 years later, she is a happy, healthy beloved family pet who although still on the shy side, has never shown even a hint of aggression (quite the opposite). Had she not come through a mill, she would have been a breeze to integrate into a household.

There is no excuse for buying a dog from a pet shop. I do understand the appeal of a reputable breeder if the intention is to show a dog, or for individuals who are afraid of hidden medical or temperament issues from dogs of unknown origin. However, mixed breed dogs are historically more sound in terms of temperament and medical history than purebreds, and as with children, there is no guaranteed perfect pet. We don't return our children if they aren't exactly what we had in mind, nor should we our pets.

Because this tragic tendency is not likely to resolve anytime soon, we should not have pets available in pet stores, as this only perpetuates the cycle of mistreatment, abuse, neglect and eventual pet abandonment.

Thank you.

Karen Mickley-Gomez, Easton CT