

TESTIMONY OF MARCY DEMBY

TO THE CT PUPPY TASK FORCE, HARTFORD, CT 12/4/13

I planned to write my own testimony. But when I found an extremely well-reasoned article by Bob Vetere, President of the American Pet Products Association, I could not resist plagiarizing it instead. Mr Vetere is both a Connecticut resident and a member of the CT Bar Association.

Most importantly, the group he has headed for the last ten years boasts Petco, Petsmart and other industry giants as key members and produces the data most often cited to support the viability of the humane sourcing model. After hearing Mr. Vetere's views, the supporters of this model might want to find a better source.

Veteri's article is in the current issue of Pet Business Magazine and includes:

"We are often confronted with ideas...that sound good when first heard. Then we start to think things through a little... and suddenly we realize that maybe it's not such a good idea after all....

Animal rights groups keep selling the idea that the way to get rid of substandard breeders is to simply ban the sale of puppies.

The logic they put forward is substandard breeders sell predominantly through pet stores...and if you eliminate the source of their sales, then you will get rid of them.

Sound Logical?

Well regretfully to an ever growing number of state and local legislators who don't seem to spend a whole lot of time thinking critically- it does.

Banning the sale of puppies in pet stores will have the largest impact on quality breeders rather than substandard breeders. So more quality breeders will close, increasing the percentage of substandard breeders.

People are going to acquire dogs.

Almost 10 million dogs are acquired every year. Many from friends and family.

An increasing number come from shelters.

But a lot still come from breeders— through pet stores or directly from breeders.

As more quality breeders close, it will not deter people from getting a dog.

Shelters alone are not the answer. In a recent study, the ASPCA indicated that about 1.6 million dogs are euthanized a year by shelters.

Not all are healthy and adoptable, but assume for this argument that they all are.

33 percent of dogs are acquired through a pet store or directly from a breeder. That's about 3.3 million puppies.

If quality breeders are knocked out of business, the number of euthanized dogs will only replace half of this.

Thus, if every dog possible in a shelter were adopted, there would still be a shortfall of almost two million dogs—every year.

If we continue to have legislation driving quality breeders out of business, where do you think the shortfall of new puppies will come from?

It will come from sub-standard breeders, overseas illegal importation and the Internet.

Somehow, this doesn't sound in line with the "logic" being put forth by the animal rights activists driving misguided legislation around the country.

Maybe it is time we started to help legislators and regulators start thinking things through a little bit and have them use logic and reason rather than just falling for what sounds good."

There is no way I could have expressed it any better or more logically. Thank you.