



Public Comment on Whether Humane Sourcing of Dogs and Cats Should Be a Requirement for Pet Shops

Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs From Inhumane Origins Public Hearing

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
December 4, 2013

Submitted via e-mail to ctps@cga.ct.gov

Thank you, members of the Task Force, for considering whether humane sourcing of dogs and cats should be a requirement for pet shops. I am Daphna Nachminovitch, senior vice president of the Cruelty Investigations Department at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). I represent PETA, the world's largest animal rights organization, and its more than 18,000 members and supporters in Connecticut. We agree with Rep. Brenda Kupchick, and we support a total ban on the sale of dogs and cats obtained from commercial breeders.

Millions of dogs and cats in animal shelters across the country must be euthanized every year simply because there are not enough homes for them. According to the Humane Society of the United States, of the 6 to 8 million cats and dogs who entered animal shelters in 2013, 25 percent of the dogs were purebred and 2.7 million adoptable animals had to be euthanized. Simply put, every time a dog or cat is purchased from a pet store, one at a local animal shelter loses his or her chance of finding a home.

Dogs sold in pet shops are largely bred, born at, and shipped out of massive breeding mills. The dogs used for breeding are bred repeatedly for years on end, warehoused in cramped, crude, and filthy conditions, until they are no longer profitable. Investigations and exposés have shown time and time again that these operations confine dogs—some by the *hundreds*—to outdoor kennels and hutches and repeatedly breed unhealthy and unsocialized animals without regard for their welfare, health, or safety. Dogs are discarded once they are no longer able to produce offspring. Some are killed, others are auctioned off, and many are abandoned. Puppy-mill operators often breed dogs who are related to each other (parents and offspring, siblings, etc.). Not only does this contribute to the animal homelessness and overpopulation crisis, it has also led to chronic genetic ailments in virtually every breed. In fact, there are more hereditary canine diseases (about 370) than there are dog breeds (about 350).

In 2010, a report published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the Inspector General uncovered widespread horrific conditions at puppy mills across the country. Inspectors cited dirty, insect-infested conditions and numerous complaints from buyers who had received animals who were sick or dying. The report also revealed that, for years, USDA inspectors had failed to cite or properly document inhumane treatment and took little to no enforcement action against violators.

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington, D.C.
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Oakland
554 Grand Ave.
Oakland, CA 94610
510-763-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Affiliates:

- PETA Foundation (U.K.)
- PETA Asia Pacific
- PETA India
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands

PETA receives complaints on a daily basis about pet shops that keep and/or sell sick and injured animals, deprive animals of effective veterinary care, and leave unsalable animals in their own waste, hidden away from the public eye in dark back rooms, or cruelly kill them. Pet shops promote impulse purchases of animals, which often leaves them subject to poor, inadequate care by people who are unprepared and/or unable to provide for their needs.

The pet trade's priority is profit, and it is notorious for taking shortcuts at the animals' expense. In addition to the cruel conditions in which these animals are bred, raised, shipped, and sold, each animal purchased in a pet shop means an animal in a shelter must be euthanized for lack of a good home. We respectfully urge Connecticut to join efforts to combat the overpopulation crisis by supporting a total ban on the sale of commercially sourced dogs and cats by pet stores.

Thank you.