

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

**PA 14-77**

SB445

House	6470-6476	7
Senate	1870-1878, 1885-1886	11
Environment	1262-1276, 1433, 1434, 1438, 1439-1440, 1444- 1452, 1454-1530, 1652- <u>1742, 1744, 1774-1775</u>	200

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2014**

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6233 – 6539**

Chamber, we'd appreciate it.

Representative Verrengia, for what reason do you rise?

REP. VERRENGIA (20th):

I'd like my vote recorded in the affirmative.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Mr. Clerk, please indicate Representative Verrengia's vote in the affirmative. Recalculate the vote.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 475 as amended by Senate "A".

Total Number Voting 144

Necessary for Passage 73

Those Voting Yea 142

Those Voting Nay 2

Those Absent and Not Voting 7

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill passes -- the bill as amended passes in concurrence with the Senate.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 490?

THE CLERK:

House Calendar 490, favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment, Substitute Senate Bill 445, AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE SALE OF CATS AND DOGS FROM INHUMANE ORIGINS AT CONNECTICUT

rc/gdm/gbr  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

476  
May 6, 2014

PET SHOPS.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Gentile.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move for -- I'm sorry -- I  
move --

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Acceptance.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

-- acceptance of the Joint Committee's  
favorable report and -- and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is on acceptance of the Joint  
Committee's favorable report and passage of the  
bill.

Will you remark, madam?

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of  
Amendment LCO Number 4552. I ask that it be called  
and I can summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 4552 which has  
been previously designated Senate Amendment "A".

THE CLERK:

Senate Amendment "A", LCO 4552, introduced by

rc/gdm/gbr  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

477  
May 6, 2014

Senator Meyer, et al.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The gentlewoman seeks the leave of the Chamber to summarize.

Is there objection?

Seeing none, you may proceed with summarization, madam.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is a strike-all amendment which implements the recommendations of the task force making various changes to the pet shot licensee statutes, and I move adoption.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question is on adoption of Senate Amendment "A".

Will you remark?

Representative Shaban.

REP. SHABAN (135th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand in support of the amendment. This is not the bill that a lot of folks thought it might have been about a year or two ago. This is a collaborative effort, and I urge adoption.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

Do you care to remark further on Senate

Amendment "A"?

Representative Kupchick.

REP. KUPCHICK (132nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in strong support of this bill, by no surprise. I'd just like to say that some people are probably wondering how this bill is different from the was -- from what was introduced last session.

Many people wanted a ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores. And while that was a difficult concept for many people to get their minds around, the task force worked very hard to come up with recommendations that would allow for a lot of accountability in -- in the market for consumers, but also to try to push to have pet stores purchase their animals from places that weren't as bad as the worst.

So in this bill, we're now requiring that pet stores purchase their puppies from mills that don't have direct violations or some indirect violations. That's a huge, important part in protecting pets and animals.

It also has a lot of accountability factors for consumers, that they will be reimbursed if they bring home a dog and it gets sick within 20 days. I think that's a big and important part for consumers. And also, hopefully, it will encourage the pet

industry to purchase healthier animals that come from better places.

The USDA has an Animal Welfare Act, and that's where a lot of these regulations come from. I just want to thank some people who worked on the task force. We spent a lot of time over the summer and through the fall, and I would like to thank Senator McKinney, who brought this issue up many years ago and served on the task force.

I'd like to thank Senator Duff who co-chaired the task force with me; Representative Grogins, Amy Harrell, Deb Bresch, Annie Hornish, Bob Shea, and Chris Adams who also helped me. And I would like to thank Senator Meyer and Representative Gentile and Representative Shaban for their hard work and -- and -- over the last few weeks helping me; and Representative Miner and Senator Chapin, who really -- and helped me quite a bit to work through this process, and I really appreciate it; and my Minority Leader and my caucus for putting up with me.

And I just -- I would just like to say that, in 2012 -- in 2012, 2700 dogs and cats were euthanized in the state of Connecticut and four million dogs and cats were euthanized nationwide. And I would hope that people would choose rescue or shelter for their pets, or through a local breeder.

But this bill, I think, allows us to have -- have a moral responsibility in making sure we, as a civilized society, make sure that our animals that we are -- that are under our care, are taken care of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, madam.

Would you care to remark? Would you care to remark further on Senate Amendment "A"?

If not, let me try your minds.

All those in favor of Senate Amendment "A", please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Those opposed, nay.

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Would you care to remark further on the bill as amended?

If not, staff and guests to the Well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

Will members please return to the Chamber

immediately.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted?

Would members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Would the Clerk please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 445, as amended by Senate "A", in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number Voting	143
Necessary for Passage	72
Those Voting Yea	143
Those Voting Nay	0
Those Absent and Not Voting	8

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill as amended passes in concurrence with the Senate.

Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I move we immediately transmit all items acted upon in the House, waiting for further action in the Senate.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Motion is for immediate transmittal.

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
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SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

If there's no objection, I would ask that this item be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, ma'am.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page five, it is Calendar 295, substitute for Senate Bill Number 445, AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE SALE OF CATS AND DOGS FROM INHUMANE ORIGINS AT CONNECTICUT PET SHOPS, Favorable Report of the Committee on Environment. There are amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, Madam President. I do move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes, Madam President. There is a -- a strike all amendment, which is LCO 4552 and I ask if the Clerk would kindly call it.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 4552, Senate "A", offered by Senator Meyer, Chapin, et. al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. Thank you. I move the -- move the amendment and ask leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on adoption. Please -- please continue, sir.

SENATOR MEYER:

Colleagues, you'll see that -- that this strike all amendment has -- has a lot of support on both Republican and Democrat and both Houses of the General Assembly. It is the result of the good work of a task force that we created last year to look at the question of the sale and purchase of commercial puppies and the problems we've had with puppy mills -- puppies that have come from puppy mills in Connecticut. Not puppy mills in Connecticut, from other states.

And what -- what this bill does is it does several things. Rather than banning the sale of commercial puppies in Connecticut, which some advocates have sought, this bill does not go in that direction. What it seeks to do instead is to establish a higher standard of care for our puppies and our -- and our kittens.

And so the first thing it does is it -- it establishes a standard of care by the Commissioner of Agriculture and then it goes on to -- to require compliance with that standard of care.

It also deals with the question of pet shop reimbursement of owners who buy a dog or a cat from the pet store when the -- when the animal turns out to have a serious defect. And what it does is it -- it increases the payment that we made by the pet store to the animal owner for the sickness or defect of the dog or the cat. It increases -- it increases that amount of money.

The bill also requires a -- a pet shop or pet shops, and they're -- I think there are now 16 or 17 of them in Connecticut, that do sell puppies and kittens. It requires them to post United States Department of Agriculture inspection reports on the -- on the kennels of -- of the dogs that they're seeking to sell. So that is -- that's a helpful -- helpful thing for -- for our owners.

And then, finally, the bill relates to some requirements for breeders, breeders of dogs and cats, and provides that those breeders must be in the possession of a license from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and also from any applicable state agency.

So that is the bill in essence. It got -- it got rather remarkable support at the public hearing from both animal lovers and also from pet stores. And I want to say that in many ways, in the years that I've been here in the Senate, the spirit behind this bill has been from -- from John McKinney, Senator McKinney, who -- who brought this to the attention of the Environment Committee when I first became Chair. So I -- I want to publicly thank him for that.

That is the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I think Senator Meyer just referenced Senator McKinney's dogged determination.

THE CHAIR:

Nice.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Certainly, Senator Meyer was correct that the public hearing on this is actually kind of in an extension of last year's public hearing, where advocates were trying to move this -- this idea forward. And last year, you may recall, I think unanimously this Chamber supported the creation of a task force and the recommendations they came back with most -- the leadership of the Environment Committee and ultimately the Environment Committee agreed with.

I think it would be proper at this time to not only extend my appreciation to Senator Meyer for helping to move this bill forward, but to also thank both Senator Duff and Senator McKinney, who spent their summer and fall working on the task force to report back to the Environment Committee with those recommendations.

It is a product of compromise, which we do a lot in this building. And I think it's a good compromise.

I think to the point about inhuman sourcing, I think one of the sections in here is very important and that deals with the prohibition for a pet shop to get an animal from a -- a licensed breeder who would be inspected through the USDA, who has more than one direct violation.

I believe direct violation is one that directly affects the health and welfare of the animal. Or more than three indirect violations, which are less serious offences, within a two-year period.

So I know it doesn't go quite as far as some people wanted to, but it does take us in a -- in a good direction and I -- I'm thankful to those who worked

very hard on this bill and I encourage my colleagues to support it. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Good evening.

I would like to also thank Senator Meyer and Senator Chapin for their work on the Environment Committee. Certainly, Representative Kupchick and Senator McKinney as well.

I think that this bill speaks to the values that we share in the State of Connecticut. When we worked very hard over many years to protect our animals, those that don't have a voice and can't lobby here at the State Capitol. And we -- we have worked hard to show our values through legislation in protecting our four-legged friends and others.

And it's certainly something that's not always easy to do in trying to get consensus on. So I remember last -- at the end of last session, we did put together a -- a bill that put forth a task force that I was able to co-chair with Senator -- Representative Brenda Kupchick and have Senator McKinney and others on the task force.

I'm sure many of you know that it was not a -- a task force that was - that came with easy answers. In fact, many times, both sides of the issue were -- were miles apart and it was difficult to receive consensus on practically anything.

Though we were able to in the end get consensus on -- on a report on most issues, most recommendations of that -- of that task force -- and something I'm -- I'm proud of the fact that we were able to do. And -- and so because of that, we're able to stand here today and vote on some legislation as a result of the hard work that many people did over the summer and the fall.

So I want to again thank Senator Meyer for his work and Senator Chapin, Senator McKinney, Representative Kupchick for what they've done, the advocates who -- who were there and who spent a lot of time, and the public who came to our public hearings and were with us really every step of the way.

I'm proud of what we're doing. I think it does, again, speak to the values that we have in the State of Connecticut, and we're -- are slowly but surely educating our consumers and those who might make purchases or rescue animals and really kind of make sure that they are making decisions that are right for them, but also with the proper amount of information so that they can make those decisions with confidence.

I urge the Chamber and my colleagues to please support the legislation. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, there's the old saying if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. I actually came to this issue as I was first running for the State Senate.

The gentleman who held the 28th State Senate District prior to my first election was a former Senator Ted Lovegrove, who, unfortunately, is no longer with us. And we had breakfast at a diner in which he told me that he was not going to seek reelection and wanted me to think about running for this seat.

And we had a very good conversation and one of the things he said to me was to not give up on the puppy bill. And I didn't know a lot about what he was talking about, but Senator Lovegrove was way at the forefront of fighting against puppy mills.

He loved animals, had a lot of animals at his house/farm in Fairfield and Easton, and it's something

I always kept with me. I obviously, as a dog lover and I lost our dog a while ago, but really got frustrated with the churning of dogs at puppy mills.

And I think the first time I ever tried to do something on the matter, I actually put in a bill to ban the sale of dogs from pet shops. I was a young legislator and ran into the pet shop lobby and didn't realize that pet shops actually hired lobbyists.

In -- in turn of fact, they are very good people fighting for small businesses who are able to educate and play an important role in this process.

So to the advocates on both sides, I say thank you, especially to Senator Duff, Senator Chapin, and Senator Meyer for their hard work and their patience through this process because it did require a lot of patience.

And lastly, there are many people in the house, but I just want to single out my friend, Representative Kupchick. She is constantly working with animal rescue and other animal organizations, like Representative Urban and many others down in the House, as a leader on animal rights issues.

And she's the one who really has taken a lot of the slack. Admittedly, I did not do nearly the work that she and others did on the task force and I want to thank her publicly for that.

So thank you to all for getting this done. Let's hope it passes the House. I fear for the House members if they don't bring it up, but it -- it's a good bill. It's going to really help a situation.

I mean, we all know how much, if you're a dog owner, and I know talking to Senator Meyer about losing a dog, how much they really are part of the family, and especially when you have kids, and so to make sure that the dogs that people are buying for their families and getting for their families, bringing into the families, are healthy is an important part of what we're doing here.

So thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not, I'll try your minds on Senate "A". All those in favor of Senate "A", please say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed?

Senate "A" passes. Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Madam President.

I do want to acknowledge Senator Duff. I -- I neglected to mention him before. Because he was -- as Senator McKinney pointed out and Senator Chapin point out, he was a member of the task force that brought about this result tonight.

And those of us who were on the task force heard about the work that you did all last summer and fall and under great contention in part.

I also would like to mention that Senator Cassano has pointed out to me that some of his constituents have called who were -- who - who saw an earlier version of this bill. And under the earlier version, we want to be no public confusion on this. Under an earlier version, the 16 pet stores that sells dog and cats were to be grandfathered in a phase-out, in a phase-out, of the sale of -- of puppies and kittens at our - - in our pet stores.

That was dropped in -- as part of a compromise and that has made the bill acceptable to so many people across the State of Connecticut, including, by the

way, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, which -- which specially, in testimony, endorsed this bill.

So I wanted to avoid, as Senator Cassano did, any confusion on that subject.

So that -- that is the bill and, Madam President, if there's no objection, could this go on our Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir. Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 26, Calendar (inaudible) House Bill Number 5081, AN ACT CONCERNING PHOSPHOROUS REDUCTION REIMBURSEMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES, Favorable Report of the Committee on Environment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Madam President.

I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the House of Representatives.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. Briefly, colleagues, you know, when I think of this phosphorus bill, I think of our former colleague, Senator Andrew Roraback, who was such a fighter of -- of the contamination that phosphorus is given. And this bill moves us in a good direction in that regard.

On page five, Calendar 295, Senate Bill 445.

On page nine, Calendar 342, House Bill 5098.

And on page 10, Calendar 343, House Bill 5259.

On page 13, Calendar 404, Senate Bill 456.

Page 14, Calendar 408, Senate Bill 489.

On page 16, Calendar 430, House Bill 5285.

On page 18, Calendar 439, House Bill 5540.

On page 26, Calendar 497, House Bill 5081.

And on page 29, Calendar 511, House Bill 5146.

Page 30, Calendar 53, Senate Bill 203, and Calendar 95, Senate Bill 176.

On page 31, Calendar 116, Senate Bill 430.

Page 38, Calendar 280, Senate Bill 312.

And on page 41, Calendar 395, Senate 104.

THE CHAIR:

I guess that's all it. Okay.

Mr. Clerk, will you please open the machines and -- I'll open the machines. You call for a roll call vote.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call is ordered in the Senate on today's Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's Consent Calendar.  
Total number voting 35  
Those voting Yea 35  
Those voting Nay 0  
Absent and not voting 1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, before concluding today's session, would yield the floor to members who may wish to announce Committee meetings or for other points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there points of personal privilege? Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, while I enjoyed being at the circle today, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish my wife a very happy birthday today.

THE CHAIR:

Oh my goodness.

SENATOR FASANO:

I missed the birthday dinner, but it -- I can't think of another group to spend it with other than my wife. So happy birthday to my wife.

THE CHAIR:

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT  
PART 3  
1066 – 1779**

**2014**

benefit to this bill. We'll find out if property owners who have been remediating their property have cleaned up parts of them. We'll find out what parts there are and those pieces will be able to be put back into productive use, or the owner will be able to, as Deputy Commissioner McCleary likes to say, release the value of that property so that value could be leveraged for purposes of bank financing that potentially could be used to clean up the remaining balance of the property.

At this point, though, we don't know. There is not regular updating with the agency.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: I would imagine this would also encourage some efforts at remediation that may not be covering a whole property but it could get some increments of remediation done that aren't being done now.

ANNE CATINO: Absolutely. It provides a benefit and advantage to brownfield sites and those owners and developers who are working on cleaning up their property.

This particularly impacts the larger properties where you can take, you know, two or three acres, clean it up and release the value of that property and then work on the next two to three acres. If you have a larger site, it starts to chip away at cleaning up portions of properties. Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, Representative. Any other questions? If not, thank you very much.

ANNE CATINO: Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Next up is Representative Kupchick.

REP. KUPCHICK: Good afternoon, Representative Albis. The Chairs aren't here, so I will dispense with my cute, you know, my regular

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introduction. I just want to thank you for the opportunity to allow me to come and speak.

I would just be speaking, basically, as Co-Chairman of the Task Force that the Legislature put into practice last Session and we met from September through to the end of January, meeting frequently. We held two public hearings that were well attended, one in Fairfield, one in the Legislative Office Building.

We heard from many people who had support for the original intent of the bill that was introduced last Session to ban the sale of pets, puppies and kittens in pet stores. We also had a lot of people come, employees who worked for the pet store, pet stores and the owners of the pet stores.

On our Task Force, I thought we had a fairly balanced amount of people. We had a representative from the Pet Industry Council. We had a representative from, Dr. Goldman from the Veterinarian Association. We had a local breeder on the Task Force. We had the Department of Agriculture Ray Connors. We also had a representative from the Connecticut Humane Society, the ASPCA and Connecticut Votes for Animals.

And we, I thought we learned quite a bit on both sides of the issue and I thought we came together with a fairly good compromise and I'm just going to quickly say that the recommendations that the Task Force put out are some, are mostly included in the bill except for some things that I'd like to mention now.

We want some language changes on the parts about the USDA violation. We were in agreement. Even the pet industry was in agreement that they wanted to get rid of some

of the bad actors that are in their words, making their industry look bad.

So we want some language changes there. There are some things that are not in here. One in particular is this conveyance fee issue. We had a unanimous vote on this and this would have, and I'll read it, establish a conveyance fee of not less than \$5 on the sale of each cat and dog by any pet shop or animal importer required a deposit of such funds to a trust that will go to the Department of Agriculture to help them hire someone part-time to assist with the enforcement of the statute.

What we, we feel that that was a good thing, a \$5 conveyance fee, up to \$5 conveyance fee and that would be for animal importers and pet stores who sell animals, and I'm a little disappointed that it's not in there in the new language. I'd like to see it in there.

Additionally, one of the things we talked a lot about was, the Department of Agriculture said that they had an extreme difficulty regulating the current state statutes that we have now on the books.

So for example, we increased the statutory fines on animal importers and we strengthened those in the last legislative Session. However, so when someone pops up at say a parking lot and sells animals without registering with the state and have a certification, they get fined very heavily.

However, when a pet store violates our current state statutes, there is a piece in the statutory language that doesn't allow the Department of Agriculture officers to write a ticket. They can just write a warning.

And from the Department of Agriculture's Ray Connors says he's having, you know, his men, his staff when they go out, they want to write tickets when they are violating the laws. They don't have that (inaudible) certificates on site for the puppies. If they are not posting the breeder information on the cage so that the consumer can see where an animal came from with the USDA number, and the booklet that's supposed to be close by the animal so that if you're a consumer and you walk in and you see these two puppies and on the cage it says, Yorkshire Terrier coming from what breeder, what the USDA license number is, you can look here and look it up and see what the health records are for that breeder.

That is just a common sense thing to do for a consumer. They should be able to look it up.

Now, as I mentioned, during our Task Force meeting, two years ago I just went and visited all the pet stores in the State of Connecticut, just on my own because this issue was something that I cared about, and I have to tell you the majority of the pet stores were not in compliance with our statutes.

They weren't posting these breeder information on the cages. There wasn't any information about where these animals came from.

Over, since the Task Force began its work, I've received literally, literally nearly 1,000 emails and calls from people across the state who are in support of the original intent of the law but are in support of something that's going to make a difference in the lives of animals who are living in this commercial mill.

And I have to tell you a lot of these people who contacted me, who bought a sick animal, who possibly had died a month later or they spent,

like I can't even tell you how many thousands of dollars. I mean, even a constituent from Representative Hennessy's district, \$8,000 on a bloodhound puppy that he brought home. The night he brought it home, it couldn't breathe and he had to bring it to emergency care. The dog had pneumonia. He had all these illnesses. That dog was sick when he brought it home and has yet to receive \$1 in compensation.

But he didn't know that he should contact the Department of Agriculture and I would venture to say to anybody, any of us, ask your friend and family. Ask your constituents. Do you know that if you buy a sick dog from a pet store who you call to file a complaint, and I would say to you that 98 percent of them have no idea that you call the Department of Agriculture. They don't know that. I didn't know it before I was a Legislator. I thought agriculture meant farms.

So what I'm saying to you is that the recommendations I think are a fair, a fair compromise. I still do strongly believe that as a citizen of this country, that it's just our moral responsibility to watch out for these animals who rely on us that we've bred, these domestic animals that we've bred for our enjoyment, for us to have as companions in our lives, for us to watch over them, make sure they're not being hurt or abused or being treated inhumanely.

And I would like to, love to see a grandfather clause so that we weren't hurting current businesses, and that they would be under the new regulations so that we had more accountability and we made sure they were coming from higher standard commercial mills, but I would like to see a grandfather and no more animals like this being sold.

Because quite frankly, a commercial breeding facility is not a place that's a good place for an animal. Thank you for your time and if you have any questions I'd be happy to answer them.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Representative Kupchick. Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Representative Kupchick, I'm sorry I missed some of your testimony. I gather you're for grandfathering the current 17 pet stores that do sell commercial puppies and then going forward. Is it your position that we should be banning sale of commercial puppies in those puppy stores?

REP. KUPCHICK: Well, just to go back, because I know you missed part of it. I talked about what our recommendations were and how we went through this long process and some of the language changes, which I'll submit to the Committee should be just to tighten up some of the things that you transferred into your bill.

And just one notable thing was the conveyance fee and I mentioned it before you came back in the room. That was a unanimously supported recommendation of the Committee.

So the pet industry and everyone thought that an up to \$5 conveyance fee, paid by importers and pet store owners for every dog they sell or adopt out toward, would go into a fund to the Department of Agriculture that would simply allow them to hire a part-time person, and actually that was an issue that the Department of Agriculture asked us to include in the recommendations.

So that was one thing I'd really like to push for because I think that will make a huge difference.

And I know that a ban on the sale of pets did not come through, through the bill that the Committee raised and I'm not surprised by that. Very controversial.

However, I thought, I'm still asking, or I'm still pleading for a grandfather clause and that would go back to what you were asking, Senator Meyer, would allow the current pet store owners to operate under the new set of regulations should they be passed this Legislative Session but would stop the practice of selling animals in pet stores after whatever time lapses when those pet stores are finished.

SENATOR MEYER: Oh, you're saying you would actually ban pet stores from selling any pets at all?

REP. KUPCHICK: New pet stores.

SENATOR MEYER: They couldn't be shelter or rescue dogs?

REP. KUPCHICK: Well, I mean, I don't know. Currently, many of the pet stores in Connecticut partner with rescues and so they do adoption events on the weekend. They don't actually have to take care of the animal. They don't want the responsibility. They don't want to have to house them, feed them, take them outside, vet care. They just partner with rescues and the rescues show up there on the weekend.

People come. If they want a dog they get it, and then they walk into their pet store and buy byproducts for the animal and the pet stores really get the win/win. They don't have any of the trouble and they just get the benefit, really, of partnering.

I don't think, I wouldn't want to require any pet store, personally, that was one of the recommendations that didn't pass the Task

Force, was to require pet stores to sell a portion of shelter animals. I don't think that that's appropriate because I think people are in rescue for a reason. They love animals and they want to take care of them.

If you don't want to take care of a rescue animal, you shouldn't be made to do that.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Representative Hennessy, followed by Representative Case.

REP. HENNESSY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd just like to thank you, Representative Kupchick for your tireless advocacy for animals in Connecticut and just to comment that I've always had pets and they've always been rescues, or private, you know.

I know the family that got the dog, whatever. I just can't see going to a pet store and buying a pet off of, you know, off the shelf when there's just so many animals that need homes. I thought I'd throw that out there. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Representative Case.

REP. CASE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Representative Kupchick. I appreciate you bringing the issue forward and filling up my email box. It's a great cause, a great thing that's going on.

My question for you is, how many animals, or how many dogs and cats are actually bought on a yearly basis in the State of Connecticut? Do we know that from pet stores?

REP. KUPCHICK: From the information we received through the Task Force it was about 7,000 puppies were sold through Connecticut pet stores and I believe the average would be about

four percent of the total pet population in Connecticut.

So there was argument made during the Task Force meeting that people would have nowhere to go to get a puppy if eventually we grandfathered it out or banned them, and there are a lot of local breeders. It was brought up during the Task Force by someone who testified that there was somewhere of 121 local breeders within a hundred mile radius of Connecticut that bred all kinds of dogs.

So I think there's sort of like a little hysteria being played or propaganda that if pet stores close nobody could ever get a purebred puppy again, which I don't believe that's true.

There's plenty of people who breed animals that you can get a puppy. It might be a little harder than just walking into a pet store. As one veterinarian who testified before the Committee that she felt that puppies shouldn't be as easy to get as Clark bars. You shouldn't be able to just walk in and pick one up and take it home. You should put a little time into this effort of choosing an animal that's going to be in your home for probably 15 or more years.

REP. CASE: Yeah, and I can appreciate that. Personally, in purchasing my dog I did the homework with it and you know, purchased it from a breeder. Had to travel quite a ways to get it.

But just a few more questions for you. We have a registry of these dogs in most municipalities. Most people register them and they need to be registered.

I'm not asking municipalities to do more work, but is there a questionnaire on that registry that tells us where that dog was purchased?

REP. KUPCHICK: You mean from a pet store?

REP. CASE: Well, if you go to your town hall and you register your dog --

REP. KUPCHICK: License it?

REP. CASE: License it.

REP. KUPCHICK: Okay.

REP. CASE: Is there a question on there that says, so we can gather better information on where these dogs, cats are coming from?

REP. KUPCHICK: You know, I really don't know. I'm not sure if they ask you where you got your dog. I think they just add breed and age and if they're vaccinated.

REP. CASE: Right. I didn't know if that would help us in research in finding out where people are getting their animals from. It might be something more we can chat about off, but once again, I appreciate you for bringing it to the forefront and your hard and diligent work and what you're doing for the humane animals in the State of Connecticut.

I mean, dogs are part of our families and they need to be healthy and you're doing the right thing. I appreciate it.

REP. KUPCHICK: Thank you, Representative.

REP. GENTILE: Representative Belsito.

REP. BELSITO: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Representative. Seven thousand pets sold in 17 stores. That's a little under 500 per store. That 7,000, that's a lot of dogs and cats being

sold, so that's a good amount of business that I'm anticipating them losing because of your bill.

My question is, where are we going to go to get the dogs if we don't go to the pet store?

REP. KUPCHICK: Okay. I just would like to mention, Representative Belsito, the bill that your Committee raised does not have that language in it. There's no banning of the sale of any pets.

REP. BELSITO: No --

REP. KUPCHICK: The, even the recommendation tightened up the consumer protection of the puppies, of the animals, where they come from.

The grandfather clause that I support, would allow those pet stores to continue to sell those puppies, although under far greater regulations that would say they couldn't purchase from commercial mills that have direct violations and some indirect violations, and I believe the puppy purchasing public would want a puppy from a clean, healthy, USDA record mill as opposed to one that has USDA violations.

So, but if there were eventually, say, in 25 years of whatever, no more pet stores, I would imagine they would what I do or what a lot of people I know, do. They go on line or they call and they learn about a breeder and they go visit that breeder's home and they see where the dog is being raised, and they get to see that it's clean and nice and they purchase that purebred dog.

Or they, like myself, got purebred dogs through a rescue when they were four months old.

REP. BELSITO: Right. I understand that, but there's a question in my mind as to, if we

eliminate those stores, which we're putting all this control on now, where are they getting the dogs, how many litters they're having, we're leaving it out there to anybody, and how are we going to regulate them? You now, the individuals who are mass producing puppies.

And that has to happen because if it's that lucrative a business and I'm looking in the paper and I'm seeing dogs for \$500, inexpensive, \$1,200, \$1,500, \$2,000 for some dogs, those are private breeders. How do you know how they're not being bred consistently every year?

In Pennsylvania they have a law that says that you can only breed a dog, I think it's once every year or once every two years. I know that because I happen to have bought a couple of dogs down in Pennsylvania, which was from a breeder that was well listed, well recommended and one of the puppies died within a year and a half of our purchasing, with cancer, and I didn't think that that was, we had no recourse at all.

And right now, if you buy a puppy from a store, and if we put the right controls on those stores and regulations, if I had purchased that dog from a local store, I could have gone back to that store. So that's what my question was to begin with, where are we going to go when we're buying them from just a private breeder? No place.

You're creating like not only 17 stores that we have in the state. We're going to have maybe 1,000 stores by people just going into breeding dogs. We're going to have more dogs than we're going to have people in this state.

REP. KUPCHICK: Are you suggesting people are going to start breeding dogs at an alarming rate?

REP. BELSITO: Absolutely.

REP. KUPCHICK: Okay.

REP. BELSITO: Because there are no regulations on them, none whatsoever. Maybe your bill should include people who have dogs that they're breeding, because they have to be controlled. They should have the same controls on them that you're putting onto the stores.

REP. KUPCHICK: Actually, in our recommendations, I don't know if you, did you read the bill, Representative, that the Environment --

REP. BELSITO: This is the first I've seen this.

REP. KUPCHICK: Well, if you read the bill you would see that it was putting parity, and it would also put controls over local breeders in the State of Connecticut.

And that if you read the first section of it --

REP. BELSITO: Right.

REP. KUPCHICK: -- that whole part there talks about that part of it, the local breeders and their regulations.

And yes, I do believe that, like I said, I've been working on this issue for a number of years and I have been contacted by a lot of people who had sick animals from pet stores, did not, went back to that pet store and got nothing. Nothing. Zero.

So it is not a guarantee that if you buy a puppy from a pet store that they are going to give you something in return for your sick puppy, not any money, and that's why we include in these, in the recommendations from the Task Force, which were transcribed into the bill that your Committee raised, that would hold

more accountability for an animal purchase, selling an animal.

So, for example, you bring an animal home and the first 20 days you have it, it comes down with a serious illness that could potentially cost you thousands of dollars in x-rays, in medicine, in blood work and whatever else, that the pet store has to pay some of that. They are responsible to pay some of that, and that's an accountability factor.

And they would also have to pay fines, just like animal importers have to pay.

So for example, if I come into the State of Connecticut and I am a rescue and I have 20 dogs with me that I've rescued from (inaudible) and I open up an adoption day at some parking lot.

I have to register with the State of Connecticut. I have to provide the health certificates for all of those animals that they've been vet checked, that they have their vaccinations and that they are healthy with the State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture, and I have to do all of those things.

And if I don't do them, I have to pay a \$500 fine to the Department of Agriculture for each and every animal that I did not register with them.

We are asking in this new language that the pet stores be held to the same standards.

REP. BELSITO: Thank you. Thank you for all your hard work in doing that. I just want to say that the dog that died, was one of the sister of the other dog that we had, that bill was over \$3,000.

REP. KUPCHICK: What kind of dog was it?

REP. BELSITO: It was a yellow lab and golden retriever mix.

REP. KUPCHICK: I'm very sorry to hear that.

REP. BELSITO: Yeah. I just don't want to see people go through that because that probably was the breeder's fault because they might have been over-breeding the dog, and it was on a beautiful farm in Pennsylvania that we went down to pick up the two dogs, but they are family.

REP. KUPCHICK: Oh, animals get sick.

REP. BELSITO: Oh, yeah.

REP. KUPCHICK: And I'm not saying that any animal that you don't purchase from a pet store is never going to get sick. We know that that's not true. I mean, animals get sick, but they shouldn't get sick the first month you have it, and if they do, I think there should be some accountability.

REP. BELSITO: Yeah.

REP. KUPCHICK: Across the board.

REP. BELSITO: I agree. It's not just that. I just would not like to see a boom in the dog breeding business happen here in Connecticut without some controls on it. But thank you.

REP. KUPCHICK: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, Representative Kupchick.

REP. KUPCHICK: Thank you for the time. I appreciate it.

REP. GENTILE: Henry Talmage.

And what I'm telling you is, based on the science, it's not going to do any of those things and think Lyme Disease is a big issue that people have used to promote Sunday hunting and you know, the Center for Disease Control, National Health Authorities, even our own Connecticut Health Department do not recommend hunting to control Lyme Disease because it doesn't work.

Yet we're still hearing that being a pivotal reason that a number of Legislators are moved to support this bill, and what I want to say is, you know, if those are the reasons and they're not based in good science, then, you know, we need to draw that to your attention.

REP. CASE: Okay. I appreciate your answers. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, Laura. Jack Kealey, followed by Bob Crook.

JACK KEALEY: Hello, Representative Gentile and Senator Meyer. I'm Jack Healey and I would like to thank the Committee for bringing up these bills because they are a great concern of mine.

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H.B. 5080 would allow bow and arrow hunting on Sundays. I'm opposed to this bill because I feel kids have a high risk of getting hurt if they, if hunting is allowed every day of the week, because I'm sure they'd like to hike and play and families would like to picnic with kids when school is out. So that's why I feel it's a lot better having at least one day off.

I'm also concerned with Section 2 of House Bill 5416 which would ban gestation crates in Connecticut. I support the bill because pigs should not go through the horror of gestation crates. Pigs are in gestation crates pretty

much their entire lives, especially when they're having babies.

So there are none we know of in Connecticut but it would be good to stop them now because the crates are so small they cannot move at all, so that's why we don't want them to come later and we want to encourage other Legislatures to join along.

And then finally, I'm in support of Senate Bill 445, which would stop pet stores from selling puppy mill dogs in the State of Connecticut.

Puppy mills are where dogs live before being sent to pet shops where there is no light, no toys, and really nothing. People have seen dead dogs in the puppy mills because they're really so horrible. I feel like they should be banned.

So, what some people think they're doing something good by buying a puppy and getting rid of their misery in the puppy mill, but they're really not. Once one puppy leaves a puppy mill, they're immediately replaced with another so the new dog goes through the same horror.

Though there are none we know of in the State of Connecticut, I want to stop pet stores from buying puppy mill dogs from other states and encourage other states to join along.

Also, I ask to please add wording to the bill so that pet shops get their dogs from rescue groups or shelters instead of the puppy mills where they are humanely treated.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today and if you have any questions, and I don't know the answer, I'll be sure to get back to you.

two years. My father mentioned hunter participation. Giving Sunday to hunters would increase participation. It would also change the science on deer management.

I am not the only hunter out there who doesn't hunt. I can guarantee that. I work six to seven days a week most of the year, when I'm not lobbying.

Giving Sunday to Sunday hunters, or giving Sunday hunting to hunters will increase participation, will increase deer management and you will see a reduction in the deer population. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Jim. Maureen Moriarty, followed by Ed Parker. Is Maureen here? Thank you.

HB 5416  
SB 445 MAUREEN MORIARTY: Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. With regard to House Bill 5080, which will allow bow and arrow hunting on private property on Sundays.

First, let me state, I have no problem with hunting for hunters per se, and while opposing this bill sounds like yet another government intrusion on the rights of the individual, upon closer examination a more troubling problem has emerged. It's the inherent problem with bow and arrow hunting that the accuracy rates are comparatively low, resulting in more deer being seriously wounded and crippled than in gun hunting.

If the wounded deer manages to get beyond the private property, the hunter can't legally follow it. The animal then suffers a slow and inhumane death and furthermore, adding another day in the week for bow and arrow hunting is not an acceptable method of managing the deer population in Connecticut.

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The more humane solution is for Connecticut not to pass this bill and support the State Department of Environmental Protection in focusing on site specific solutions and new technologies like deer contraception programs.

With regard to House Bill 5416, the ban on so-called gestation crates in Connecticut, since Connecticut farmers do not use them, and even well-known agri businesses such as Smithville Foods and Hormel, have announced that they will end this hideous practice.

It's not difficult to grasp that these contraception's function, that these contraception crates, contraptions, function as slow torture chambers for the animals. You only need to look at one picture of sows lying on their sides in them and understand that they are kept in them for years on end to have a visceral reaction to the plight of these farm animals.

In the name of all that is decent. Let's support the best practices of Connecticut farmers now and not allow gestation crates to be used in Connecticut in the future. Please.

I've always adopted homeless dogs and cats, so like many people, I didn't understand the connection between puppy mills and pet shops until I started researching. That's what brought me here today to speak.

I support Senate Bill 445, but I strongly urge my Connecticut Legislators to amend it to include the following two requirements, the immediate ban on the sale of commercially bred dogs --

REP. GENTILE: Maureen, please summarize.

MAUREEN MORIARTY: Okay. I was a small business owner myself. I understand and sympathize with

the people who own the pet shops who currently sell these dogs, but when you do the research and you find out that the source for those dogs includes animal abuse and cruelty, I can't support the sale of dogs in those shops.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Maureen. Ed Parker, followed by Julie Lewin.

HB 5080  
ED PARKER: Good evening, Chairman Gentile and Chairman Meyer and the rest of the members of the Committee. It's nice to be here. A few more hours it will be tomorrow. I'm here to testify,

My name is Ed Parker. I'm a conservationist. I'm a hunter, and a long-term member of the now-called DEEP, the last 14 years of which I've managed the Natural Resources of this state, so I'm very well versed and understand the deer management problem in this state.

I don't think anyone argues that there's an over-population. If you drive around the state in those eight of twelve, or thirteen zones, where there is an over-population, deer damage is evident.

We have problems with something like 12,000 deer vehicle collisions a year and we cannot solve this problem unless more opportunity is provided to hunters to kill more deer.

Will that work? It's worked in 42 other states and the management measures that we have authority to implement already through DEEP have also worked to slow the population growth in this state.

This bill would provide no more than 16 additional hunting days on Sunday on private property with landowner permission.

REP. CASE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, you made a good point. Sixteen days out of fifty-two possible. Correct?

ED PARKER: Correct.

REP. CASE: So you're giving 16 more days to sportsmen to go out and I'm a big supporter of keeping government off of my property and telling me what I can do with my property.

ED PARKER: Uh-huh.

REP. CASE: So, we're only talking 16 days out of 52, so they have the rest of whatever to do what they want.

ED PARKER: Yes.

REP. CASE: Okay. So, I just wanted, a great point. I didn't think of that before, but I don't think it's a huge impact and it also allows sportsmen to get out there and do what they need to do, and if we can impact the number of deer that are out there, then we're doing a good thing.

ED PARKER: And keep in mind, it's with landowner permission.

REP. CASE: Landowner permission and personal property.

ED PARKER: That is correct.

REP. CASE: Thank you very much.

ED PARKER: You're welcome.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any additional questions? Thank you. Julie Lewin, followed by Pat Young.

JULIE LEWIN: Representative Gentile, Senator Meyer and other members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving us this opportunity and

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bearing with us all, like in the evening.  
Really appreciate the opportunity.

I'm here to oppose House Bill 5080 on Sunday  
bow hunting and to support 5416, Section 2, to  
ban gestation crates for sows and to support  
445 the what we call the puppy mill bill, with  
the additional requirements of no new pet shops  
shall sell commercially bred dogs and for  
current pet shops a phase out on the sale of  
commercially bred dogs, and I believe these two  
inclusions are vital to combat the puppy mill  
trade.

So, for gestation crates, I think this --

REP. GENTILE: Julie, we're currently on Bill 5080.

JULIE LEWIN: Oh, I was signed up to talk about all  
three because the Clerk signed me up under the  
one, so do I or do I not speak?

REP. GENTILE: Go ahead, but for further information  
we're currently on Bill 5080.

JULIE LEWIN: Right. Right. The Clerk chose to  
sign me up under this bill knowing that, so  
okay. I'm for the gestation crates, I think  
providing the minimum protection from barbaric  
animal husbandry possible is so overdue and the  
public supports that, would support that.

Four, four, five on puppy mills, for 50 years  
or more, probably every national media outlet  
has broadcast or published multiple horrific  
exposes of the pet store puppy mill industry.  
For decades the largest and most powerful  
animal welfare charities and state charities in  
states which produce the most puppy mill  
puppies have attempted to achieve serious  
oversight and reasonably humane minimum  
standards of care.

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Yet after all those efforts of decades, still legally requirement minimum standards of care remain gravely inadequate and remarkably extraordinarily backward in contrast to community norms and I'm talking about the minimum standards of the U.S. Animal Welfare Act.

Yet we know that as low as they are, routinely, even these mere survival standards are violated.

So please, please imagine your own dog living that way and it's in your power to reduce this trade by supporting 445 with the inclusions above.

HB 5080

And you've heard, rather than go through my Sunday hunting comments, I strongly can associate myself with the comments of Laura Simon, who really does apply the science, and if you have any doubt about the cruelty of the hunting, the best way is to read the publications of hunters and see what they, themselves say. And thank you so much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you. Pat Young, on House Bill 5080 here? All right, moving on to Senate Bill 445. Arnold Goldman, followed by Laura Reid.

A VOICE: Dr. Goldman had a medical (inaudible).

REP. GENTILE: Okay.

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PEACH REID: Good evening, Representative Gentile, Senator Meyer and esteemed members of the Environment Committee. Many of us here tonight support pet shops selling dogs and cats, as you can see. Would you please stand up? Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: You can sit down now, please.

PEACH REID: Thank you. My name is Peach-Reid and I am the CEO of Fish Mart, the northeast's largest whole distributor of aquatics and pets. I am very familiar with Connecticut pet store owners whom I have worked with for decades. These men and women, your constituents are committed entrepreneurs, tireless workers and compassionate pet owners, not the heartless capitalists who cut corners at every opportunity as they've been portrayed.

I sit before you today as a member of PIJACs board of directors. We have a responsibility to the animals themselves, not to mention our customers and it should be apparent that pet stores have a significant financial incentive to adhere to the highest standards of care and sourcing. They are dependent on their reputation and positive word of mouth to stay in business.

Unfortunately, there are those who oppose the very existence of commercial breeders in the United States and they believe that putting Connecticut pet stores that sell dogs and cats out of business is the best way to hurt those out-of-state breeders. This agenda was apparent throughout the hearings held by the Task Force and you will continue to hear it in today's testimony.

It was recommended by the Task Force that any new pet store that opens within the state be required to source its animals exclusively from shelters, rescues and local breeders. This would be bad for new stores, old stores and the state alike.

Aside from the fact that this quote, unquote, humane model is not in existence due to its not being viable, any attempt to limit pet stores to sourcing their animals from shelters, rescues and local breeders would actually

remove the existing protections offered by the USDA certification of sources who supply them, and this would actually decrease the transparency and protection currently enjoyed by consumers and would also go on to question the applicability of the state's existing warranty law, which does not apply to shelters or rescues.

Existing stores would be forced to change or close as they could no longer sell or transfer existing licenses without doing so. This would create two types of pet retailers subject to two different enforcement regimes at a time when the State Division of Animal Control has already indicated that it lacks the resources to effectively enforce everything with which it is already charged.

Additionally, the Task Force recommended and this still includes, a provision that prohibits the use of breeders who have been cited for three or more indirect noncompliance issues by the USDA in the previous two years that affect the health and well being of the animals.

We submit that refining the language in the bill to make this specifically applicable to indirect NCIs under Sections 2.40 and 2.131 of the Animal Welfare Act would accomplish this.

Finally, I would ask that you reconsider the extent of the expansion of the state's existing pet warranty law, which was just strengthened less than two years ago. Though cases are rare, occasionally animals are sold with contracted illnesses or hereditary conditions that were not readily apparent. More than 20 states have warranty laws in existence and the vast majority have arrived at a de facto standard of reimbursement for veterinary costs up to the --

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REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Please, can you wrap up, please?

PEACH REID: I sure will. Thank you. So I would strongly encourage you to raise Connecticut's existing reimbursement rate to bring it in line with the national standard, which is the purchase price of the animal, but not to exceed that.

We at PIJAC really appreciate your efforts to address the humane treatment of animals we bring into the lives of Connecticut's families, but we remain concerned about attempts to pass legislation that does nothing to address its intended target, bad and largely unlicensed out-of-state breeders who give the entire pet industry a bad name.

Connecticut can be a leader in the push to improve conditions for all animals across the country, but we don't need to do it at the expense of our constituents. Thank you so much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Peach.

PEACH REID: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Monty Kaufman, followed by Brian Winslow.

MONTY KAUFMAN: Good evening, members of the Committee. My name is Monty Kaufman from Puppies of Westport. I'm here on behalf of your constituents, over 30,000 Connecticut families and individuals, who chose to purchase a puppy from a store since 2010.

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We created this map of the State of Connecticut that has a pin representing five dogs purchased in the state. It totals over 33,000 dogs that have been sold by pet stores in the last four

years throughout the State of Connecticut.  
That's 30,000 people.

I've provided the Committee with a breakout of all the puppies sold by city as well as those in each of your districts. The numbers in your districts range from 25 in Representative Ryan's to 854 in Senator Chapin's. It works out to over 100,000 citizens with a puppy that's part of their family, just in the last four years, a number you can more than double based on average canine life spans.

And it's a number that is far, far greater than the membership of all the animal welfare groups combined. So that's the difference in the numbers of your constituencies.

It means employment, taxes and real estate, but more importantly, it's a choice citizens made to get their best friend from the source they chose, a right no legislative body should even think of taking away from people.

If we were doing a fraction of the horrible things that we are regularly accused of, there's no way the stores could be open for an average of more than ten years.

There have been fewer than 20 complaints on the health of pet store puppies with the State Department of Agriculture from 2010 through 2013, July. That's less than six per year statewide, and with all the noise, rhetoric, billboards, posters, letters, websites and false accusations, Connecticut pet stores sold more puppies in 2013 than in any of the prior years. That speaks volumes.

We agree there are many breeders that need to change their clothes and many already have, but the same is true of many rescues, shelters and pounds, but the activists have an agenda to

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restrict free citizens to a source they approve without regard to the consumers' wishes but they need your help to accomplish that, so they have to make things look worse than they are, and they often do.

Primary evidence of the Task Force was a study the activists repeatedly referenced. After 200 hours reviewing the data, we determined that study is totally flawed.

Take Puppies of Westport. Of 72 flawed breeders they listed for Puppies of Westport in 2012, we did not get a single puppy from 41 of the 72 they listed for us. That's just off by 60 percent.

Statewide, their breeder numbers are inflated by duplicate listings. They claim 162 unlicensed breeders, when all of them were absolutely legal, and they included photos from breeders with clean inspections or from prior years.

They treat direct and indirect violations equally and breeders with any violations the same as the most egregious ones. They falsely claim that 46 percent of our 2012 breeders were horrible violators when we did not acquire a single puppy from a breeder with any direct violation at the time of purchase in the entire year of 2012. I've provided the supporting documentation.

I've also provided USDA inspection data for all 350 breeders contained in the activist's study. Over 65 have already cancelled their license and 15 more will be barred by the language in the current bill.

In addition, 69 of these breeders have had no violations since 2012 while 52 had one minor indirect and another 36 had just two minor

indirects. There is definite improvement and much more is on the way.

The USDA has 120 inspectors who can inspect every single licensee in the United States annually, twice by conducting fewer than two inspections per week. The activists are seeking a Connecticut solution for which there is hardly a Connecticut problem and it's my strong hope that the members of this Committee will understand what is really going on here and act accordingly.

Do not allow a vocal minority with misguided lost long-term agendas to dictate the direction you are going to take, and I thank you and I'm more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Monty. Any questions? Thank you.

MONTY KAUFMAN: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Just an apology here. Apparently we missed one of our sign ups and I apologize for that. It was not on my sheet. So if Mike Ose is still here, can he please come up? Mike, I apologize. Your name was not on my sheet.

MIKE OSE: Well, okay, thank you for letting me cut in. I know they were kind of on a roll with this other bill but Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, my name is Mike Ose. I speak on behalf of the Conservation Advisory Council and I did submit in support of House Bill 5080 of the act concerning deer management. I did submit testimony via email and at this time I'm going to take kind of the time that I have to maybe answer a few questions.

Senator Meyer, I know you had questions about Laura Simon's numbers. I believe her testimony

So the statement of the population is growing and we need to try and do something to curtail this, most of the deer hunting and deer harvest happens on private land because that's where the deer damage occurs, the property damage. The food is better there. They have more access to good food and this being a permission

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REP. GENTILE: Mike, can you wrap up, please.

MIKE OSE: -- from the landowners, to give you permission to hunt on their land, it kind of goes back to this landowners' rights issue whereas they're the taxpayers. Why can't they do what they want to do or give someone else permission to do what they want to do on their land regardless of what stipulations get put on this.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Mike, and my apologies for missing your name.

MIKE OSE: Questions? Answers?

REP. GENTILE: Thank you u.

MIKE OSE: Okay. All right. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Brian Winslow followed by Edmund Foucault.

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BRIAN WINSLOW: Environmental Committee, thank you for your time. My name is Brian Winslow, Director of Operations in Animal Welfare with Petland, and I would like to address the idea of eliminating puppy sales in an existing store is as switching out puppies and replacing it with dog food, toys and other products, which I have heard in other testimony at Task Force meetings.

Having consulted and reviewed financial statements of pet retailers for the past 20

years, changing business models is a very difficult and often impossible transition.

I'm here because we have a Connecticut franchisee operating under the name of Safar Stan Pet. Within the Petland family, we have some locations that sell puppies and other locations that do not. While both models, while both are models that can succeed, there are fundamental differences between the two models.

One of the most obvious and costly differences between stores that sell puppies and stores that do not is their physical location and layout. Tens of thousands of dollars are invested into not only the pet fixtures and equipment but an additional tens of thousands of dollars are invested in necessary upgrading of plumbing, electrical, and HVAC requirements.

All of the fixtures and equipment would need to be removed, the space remodeled and replaced with additional merchandise fixtures. The total cost of throwing away fixtures and buying new would be enormous.

For example, the Safari Stan store invested about \$120,000 in their state-of-the-art kennel system:

By selling puppies, an independent, locally-owned pet store distinguishes itself from the big, box competitors and establishes a loyal customer base. I know many of the stores in Connecticut have spent years and years developing loyal customers. This is essential to their survival in the suburban communities where most of these stores are located. Large national chains purchase their retail products at a much lower price than small, local retailers because of their size and buying power.

As a result, it is very difficult to compete head to head on just products. In fact, the single largest retailer of pet food and products in the country is Walmart and I think we all know the challenges of competing against a chain like Walmart.

A store that sells puppies has different training programs for their employees than non-puppy stores. The two business models also have different marketing and advertising strategies as well.

To some degree, changing your business model requires finding entirely new customers. Ask any retailer in any business model the challenge of acquiring and keeping new customers.

As you consider the future of this legislation, I encourage you to keep in mind the impact of store owners and employees. They just can't flip a switch and adopt a new business model. It is a costly and complicated process that would drive many, if not most, existing Connecticut puppy-selling stores out of business. Thank you for your time.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Brian. Any questions?  
Representative Vicino.

REP. VICINO: Thank you for your testimony. I've got a question for you. What are the problems that you see when people have problems with dogs that they've purchased?

BRIAN WINSLOW: I'm sorry?

REP. VICINO: What are the most common problems that you see when people purchase animals that have problems?

BRIAN WINSLOW: You mean the consumer?

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REP. VICINO: Yes.

BRIAN WINSLOW: Most problems are the same sort of problems that you'd see with your own children. The most common puppy ailments would be snotty noses and diarrhea. That is the most common thing that I see.

REP. VICINO: So how can you explain the big movement, the issue involved with we're looking at here? People wouldn't be getting so involved if it was because the dog had a cold. You hear of stories --

BRIAN WINSLOW: Well, I think also to Monty's point, when you look at the total number of puppies that were purchased in Connecticut, if the problems were that severe, the stores would not be in existence today.

REP. VICINO: So what you're trying to tell me, you hear of stories people have to bring the pets back. They're given new pets. You read about articles in the paper, overcrowded puppy mills, the way they treat them. This is all fabricated?

BRIAN WINSLOW: No. There are bad breeders, without a doubt. Part of my job responsibility, and this was the previous testimony in the Task Force is, I lead breeder trips and are there bad breeders out there? Absolutely. The same way there's bad lawyers and Legislators and any other profession.

But the overall majority of breeders do an excellent job, provide space and exercise and socialization well beyond the Animal Welfare Act. I've been to hundreds of breeders.

REP. VICINO: When you accept your puppies, do they go through a veterinarian physical? What's the process?

BRIAN WINSLOW: By the Animal Welfare Act, before they arrive to our store, they have to be vet checked at point of origin and a health certificate comes along with it, and then at time of arrival our business model requires that they get examined by an in-state, a local veterinarian before it's allowed to be offered for sale.

REP. VICINO: So all of your pets are inspected before they're actually sold to the public.

BRIAN WINSLOW: Multiple times.

REP. VICINO: Multiple times. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Edmond Foucault followed by Bill Katz.

EDMOND FOUCAULT: Good evening. My name is Edmond Foucault and I am here on behalf of 94 employees who make up the All Pets Club family with locations in Branford, Wallingford, North Windham and Southington. We have been connecting people across the state with their ideal pets for 25 years.

We have formed strong, lasting relationships with our customers that have spanned generations. We have had the great privilege to witness the joy a new pet gives to a family time and time again.

We watch the bond grow over the years and we share the sorrow when the time comes to the end. This is why we love what we do. The saddest thing for us would be to have to tell our customers that we will no longer be able to provide them with the perfect puppy and the amazing joy that the pet ownership brings.

I am here today because the Senate Bill 445 deals with recommendations made by the Task

Force concerning the sale of dogs, cats in Connecticut pet shops from inhuman origins.

I am not sure how many of you had a chance to sit in any of the Task Force meetings, but I was there for all of them. I was blown away by the obvious bias of the majority of the Task Force members. My very livelihood was on trial in that room and it was clear that the outcome was assured before a single public comment was made.

The prejudice against pet stores are so apparent that I begin to wonder if I was imagining it. Luckily, a Task Force member confirmed my fears when in multiple responses to customers who wrote in support of All Pets Club and positive experience we shared with them.

The replies to these citizens took the time to engage the Task Force were inappropriate. For example, one reply to the customer. I'm glad to hear you're happy with your condo-compliant dog. I wonder if you ever thought or cared about your pup's parents for how they were treated.

In response to another customer, are you aware of the treatment of the breeding dogs that supply the pet store with that cute puppy that you bought and then directed her to a website of the Human Society of the United States, one of the three activists organizations with seats on the Task Force.

To make matters worse, this HSUS website routinely ignores the fact that the vast majority of puppy mill raids target breeders who are not licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture.

These bad, out-of-state breeders' who disregard existing laws are held up as representatives of all commercial breeders who sell in the pet stores --

REP. GENTILE: Can you sum up, sir?

EDMOND FOUCAULT: I'm, uh-huh. When the reality, the stringent regulations governing our business force them to sell directly to the public via Internet and other unregulated channels.

And we wholeheartedly agree that these monsters should be shut down. This is an important distinction as All Pets Club refuses to sell any animals that come from breeders who are not USDA licensed. We go far beyond the minimum requirements imposed by the State of Connecticut to operate a pet shop.

Dismantling our industry little by little each year will not stop these bad breeders but will put professional caring breeders who supply puppies to responsible well-regulated pet stores out of business and will push more breeding underground.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Yes, Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Thank you. I just looked at the bill again. It does not ban the sale of puppies from breeders. It does not.

EDMOND FOUCAULT: Right.

REP. MUSHINSKY: There's just more disclosure in it and there's rules on returns and what the monetary value shall be. You're reading stuff into this bill that's not in here.

EDMOND FOUCAULT: But I'm just afraid in the future, every year we go through this, you know, and it just keeps driving up to it.

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REP. MUSHINSKY: Okay. But I hope, I realize there's a long history of debate between the two sides, but I hope you look at the language, because this is not an unreasonable bill. It actually allows you --

EDMOND FOUCAULT: Right. And I thank you.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Okay. Just want to make sure you read it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, sir. Bill Katz, followed by Michael Stolkey.

BILL KATZ: I'm in favor of the ban on importation of puppy mills and a five-year phase out of existing stores.

A few stores that well puppies will tell you that they only do business with reputable breeders, but they also admit it's about profit.

The industry will tell you that they support good pet care, but they are supporting some breeding farms whose only goal is to produce the greatest quantity at the cheapest prices. The neglect of these animals takes place behind distant doors conveniently out of sight and out of mind to the end user, the customer, us, in Connecticut.

Connecticut stores have an option to forge profitable relationships with animal shelters that frequently euthanize many of their dogs.

The industry will tell you that they would be in competition with these shelters, but these differences can be worked out to the benefit of the puppy stores.

Every time a solution is proposed, the industry always finds an excuse to reject it. The industry will tell you that they need the extra

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income from the sale of these animals and that jobs will be lost. You always hear this kind of excuse.

We heard it about minimum wage and Obama care. Jobs will not be lost. Pet stores sell a variety of accessories with very high profit margins.

The industry will complain that it is important to maintain the revenue stream and they will tell you that they cannot survive without it.

I recall another industry that once made this same argument. They said that their family businesses would collapse if the status quo was changed. They argued that their livestock was well taken care of with plenty of food and adequate shelter. The industry was a farming community of planters and the main crop was cotton and their income came from slavery.

They could never figure out what was so wrong because it was so profitable.

The breeding, some of the breeding industry does enslave animals. Customers who buy these dogs only see a wagging tail at the end, not the neglect that comprised this.

I appeal to your conscience and the morality of this issue. Please see through the rhetoric that comes from these 16 stores. Just think, 16 stores want you to maintain a system that perpetuates this neglect. The remainder, much of the remainder of Connecticut does not.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, sir. Any questions?  
Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good evening. I've kind of had the benefit of a number of meetings about this issue and have asked on a couple of occasions what the

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definition is that you're using for puppy mills. Do you have a definition?

BILL KATZ: Large companies, and when I'm referring in this case to puppy mills, I'm referring to of course, out-of-state mills that routinely neglect the reproduction and processing of puppies.

REP. MINER: And so, through you, Madam Chair, it's not a federal. I mean part of the problem that I've had over the years with trying to establish some guidelines in terms of acquisition is you know, what is the accepted definition of a puppy mill, because we define it here one way. George defines it another way. Iowa defines it another way.

But under the USDA definition, is that acceptable to you?

BILL KATZ: The term puppy mill is acceptable if good guidance is shown toward the process, but in many instances, and you know, I simplified my statement, but let me elaborate just a bit more.

You know, somebody can buy from a breeder that takes care of their animals, and if they're taking care of their animals in a humane way it will cost more to resell these, as opposed to a, you know, a large breeder who cares nothing about the maintenance of their creatures and they can sell for a lower price for it.

And so I would imagine that there are some stores that perhaps do a mix. They buy from someone that's more accredited and then they throw in, this is not regulated sufficiently, and even to the degree that, you know, a permit and papers were created with puppies that were purchased, how do we know whether those papers

are not reused again, or even forged with other nefarious.

So the idea of puppy mill. A puppy mill can be a good company that is conscientious and humane. But it can also represent a very growing nefarious group of people that don't give a damn about the process of selling dogs.

REP. MINER: So through you, Madam Chair, is there anything in the bill as it's currently drafted that would lead you to believe that at some point pet shops would no longer be able to sell pets?

BILL KATZ: I think that pet shops should be, should network with animal shelters because so many animal shelters are euthanizing their pets because there's such a surplus of them. So why not give, why not funnel that and again, the industry has said, well, we can't compete with the pricing that animal shelters will sell directly to the end user.

Well, that can be worked out.

REP. MINER: And I, you know, you've waited here a long time to testify and I'm willing to stay here until midnight if you want to, but my question was, in the bill as it's drafted, is there a date certain when they would no longer be able to sell dogs?

BILL KATZ: From what I know of the bill this isn't even part of the bill.

REP. MINER: Okay.

BILL KATZ: The phase out is not part of it.

REP. MINER: All right. Yep.

BILL KATZ: The ban on importation is not even part of it. I'm praying that it will be.

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REP. MINER: And I get that and through you, Madam Chair, I'm trying to, I'm trying to make heads or tails of what we have before us, and that's why I go back to the definition of puppy mill, because at one meeting that I participated in, I asked the very same question, and if we're not dealing with the same definition, if we cannot agree on a definition statutorily, my fear is that you and I, or you and somebody else will be here again next year trying to define what puppy mill is, and that's the disconnect that I'm having here.

And I don't mean to have a disconnect. I want to try and get this resolved. At the same time, let me be clear. I'm not in favor of regulating someone else's business, and so I can get the fact that maybe I don't want to buy a dog from a pet shop or you don't want to buy a dog from a pet shop, but just because you and I don't want to buy a dog from a pet shop.

You know, I listened to the gentleman testify about his 99 employees. I have to be somewhat sympathetic to his situation. I have no idea how long he's been in business, but I'll bet you everybody there cares about their job, and I'll bet they care about the animals, whether they're turtles, snakes, lizards, or dogs.

And you know, I'm with you in terms of trying to make sure that we maintain proper care but until we can define what a puppy mill is, we're kind of dancing around this and I don't think I can define for Georgia what a puppy mill is.

I think we could accept the USDA title of a puppy mill, but I don't hear you telling me that that's acceptable to you.

BILL KATZ: Again, I have to just fall back and express that a large company can be using humane procedures to birth puppies and provide

the necessary environment to prepare them for resale. And that is technically a puppy mill.

On the other hand, you might find another company that mass produces these and keeps the female dog in constant reproductive cycle, pumping these out and putting crate on top of crate and we know the evidence is out there.

Well, you know, I wanted to emphasize that I don't think that there are many, if any, retail stores here in Connecticut that would really buy something so incredulous as this, but we frequently turn a blind eye when we have the profit motive in front of us.

You know, we don't have to, we don't have to go search for an absolute reason to not buy from somebody that's selling at a low price point. That's human nature. I'm in the business world and I understand that idea.

And so I think that, but you know, I juxtapose that with the fact that we are euthanizing dogs here in Connecticut that could be rehabilitated and found good homes for, and the industry has already expressed that. We can't compete with the animal shelters. Well, we can work that out.

Let the pet stores have an exclusive from these pets in the animal shelters. That ends that argument.

But to your point, a puppy mill can be a place of origin that has considered humane effects and it can be one that cares nothing about the, what they're dealing with.

REP. MINER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you.

BILL KATZ: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Michael Stolkey followed by Togi Kittamperoor.

MICHAEL STOLKEY: Hi. My name is Michael Stolkey and I am with the Hunt Corporation and I'm willing to change my entire testimony after ties last exchange because there is no USDA definition of a puppy mill. It is, in fact, a pejorative. There has been attempts to define what a puppy mill is and there have been some leading major industry organizations in this country that have put forward a definition of what they believe a puppy mill is, or what they think it is, rather than just the prattling of an attempt at a definition, which I'm happy to share, if you would like.

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But stepping back to December, it was bothersome to me to hear and read testimony from Task Force members using their position to push for an outright ban. There was even testimony that was offered about a puppy becoming sick after being at home for ten months.

The conclusion? It had to come from a puppy mill because it became sick. No facts. No science were offered to support, which makes it just a general bias.

But this is typical of the animal rights behavior. Most of our opponents have never been to a professional breeding facility. Nobody in this room would stand for the conditions that they paint our organizations as dealing with. It just doesn't happen.

We deal with professional breeding facilities only and again, our opponents speak with emotion, but offer no science or facts.

HSUS and ASPCA pose themselves as experts yet they operate no shelters, no pet stores, no

breeding operations and they own no transportation systems of their own. Yet, both have been sued under the recall statutes here in the United States.

The Hunt Corporation by comparison, we are a licensed and regulated provider, shipping approximately 800 to 1,000 puppies a year into the State of Connecticut. Amazingly, your shelters and rescues import about 14,000 yearly and then euthanize 20 percent of them.

Every one of our puppies are micro-chipped and pre-enrolled with a lifetime membership in an AKC recovery database. They are not the animals in your shelters. They are homed in good, loving families who also receive the benefits of free training tools.

In addition, we purchase as your retailers do in this state, from top-of-the-line professional breeders who share our commitment to animal welfare.

And please know that in addition to the USDA, state and registered inspectors --

REP. GENTILE: Can you summarize, sir, please.

MICHAEL STOLKEY: I'm just about done, thank you. In addition to these levels of inspections, Hunt's trained experts are also on the ground with our breeders on a regular basis.

And lastly, we also closely monitor all USDA and inspection reports and we do not buy or ship puppies from direct violators. We have the records of this claim that I can produce to you, which incidentally was also falsely mentioned at the Task Force hearing that we do buy from direct violators and ship from direct violators. The facts are that we do not. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, sir. Togi. Followed by Sofia DaSilva.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: My name is Togi Kuttamperoor. I'm the owner and operator of Safari Stan's Pet Center in New Haven. We opened our doors December 30, 2013. I strongly believe that a person has a right to choose their perfect pet from a shelter, rescue or a pet shop.

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Of these options, of course, pet stores are the most regulated. These regulations ensure that my fellow store owners and I are attending to the health and well being of animals we hope to place in loving homes.

I am here today to tell you that the Task Force's caricatures of the pet store owners as greedy and uncaring or else ignorant dupes are entirely untrue.

Before I could open Safari Stan's, I was required to go, undergo extensive training regarding the care and welfare of animals I would carry in my store. Just a few months ago as part of my continuing education I was able to visit several breeders, speak to them, their vets and observe the quality of life at their facilities.

I was struck by the depth of their knowledge regarding dog breeds and their requirements. I was also pleased to see that they made sure the dogs were clean, had regular vet care, lived in comfortable and sanitary conditions and received exercise and good nutrition. All dogs had plenty of space that met the needs of breeds, contact with natural flooring, and were socialized with other dogs, toys and exercise room. The areas were clean, spacious and well maintained.

The dogs were treated as though they were their pets. They were lively, healthy and well adjusted and not shy away from visitors.

Yes, they can claim that they've done their research, but how many of them have really been to see these breeders that I get my puppies from.

I've attached pictures of my breeder trip and some of the places that I've been and dogs that detail the above conditions I observed during my trips with breeders.

So with all the attention that the Task Force and the activists are giving to pet stores, you would think most dogs would come from us, right?

According to the ASPCA themselves, somewhere between two to ten percent of dogs and cats obtained each year are purchased from pet shops. So how would shutting us down drive out bad out-of-state breeders or even help reduce the number of dogs and cats available in shelters?

While no one supports substandard breeders or puppy mills is it really possible that their existence can be attributed to pet store sales if we represent at the source, ten percent of the animals acquired in a given year.

Retail pet store bans will never end puppy mills for a simple reason. The unlicensed and never inspected breeders don't sell to pet stores.

Breeders who do sell to pet stores are, who do not sell to pet stores are most often unlicensed and never inspected.

Okay, I'll just try to wrap it up.

Pet stores in Connecticut are more regulated than nearly any other industry out there, yet there's only two percent of the sales pet stores are seen as targets by radical animal activists and elected officials that have been fooled by their propaganda. I'll just wrap up.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Togi.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Thank you. Any questions?

REP. GENTILE: Any questions? Representative Vicino.

REP. VICINO: Sir.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Yes.

REP. VICINO: You're a single store owner --

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Yes.

REP. VICINO: -- just went into business.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Correct.

REP. VICINO: What percentage of problems have you had in your sale of puppies?

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: As of right now, none.

REP. VICINO: None. Okay. And you've inspected these large commercial breeders.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Most of them, and we do plan on yearly trips with me and my staff going --

REP. VICINO: So why do you think, what is your feeling? What is the big issue? Is it the media? Is it that --

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: It's a group of people that just want to shut down puppy stores (inaudible).

REP. VICINO: Thank you.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: And taking the choice away from people, you know.

REP. VICINO: Thank you.

TOGI KUTTAMPEROOR: Yep.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, Togi. Sofia DaSilva followed by Ashley Kemper followed by Chad Adams?

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SOFIA DASILVA: Thank you, Madam Chairman, Chairwoman, and the members of the Environment Committee. My name is Sofia DaSilva. As an employee at Safari Stan's Pet Center, I firmly believe that keeping pets in pet stores is vital to animal welfare, consumer choice protection and pet care education.

Like many of the people in this room, I have been an animal person my whole life. I was initially skeptical about working for a pet store. The image of a dirty store filled with cages of crowded animals filled my head.

However, during my interview, I began to realize that this experience would be nothing like what I had pictured at all. My now boss, Togi, made it clear how passionate he was about his new business venture.

He started to explain Safari Stan's breeder trip policies, how every breeder must be visited before a puppy can be bought for them, the package and warranty that all puppies come with to assure new owners make their homes as prepared as possible when introducing their new family member and how every petter is open to encourage human/animal interaction and spacious enough for the animal to be comfortable.

I became even more confident in my decision to work there when we started training. It took a whole nine plus hour a day week to complete and

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it covered everything we needed to know when it came to customer service, animal care and presentation.

Everyone there was committed to the animals' welfare from puppy to guinea pig, down to the smallest goldfish.

The fastest way that I absorbed all this information was by observing how it affected our animals. I could tell a customer with certainty that their cockatiel really would go crazy without spray millet or that buying a littler pan along with a ferret would just end up in disappointment.

It also helped me to warn customers of any safety precautions they should take with certain products. It's a two-way street. The animals would educate me on a product, and in return, I would send them home with the best product out there for them.

Pet stores are also extremely important because they are sometimes the first time a person might interact with an animal in a safe and productive way. Having trained employees who can teach the right way to handle a certain pet might change the way someone deals with animals in the future.

Finally, our customers deserve a choice in the matter. Pet stores are regulated so that their puppies and kittens must have --

REP. GENTILE: Sofia, can you wrap up please?

SOFIA DASILVA: Yes, I can. Pet stores are regulated so that their puppies and kittens must have vaccinations. You cannot blame a family for wanting to bring an animal they have proof of being healthy to avoid costly veterinary visits and putting any other pets they might have in the house at risk.

It's also true that many purebred dogs bring something to the table that shelter dogs simply cannot, and those are selective traits like being hypoallergenic. Customers have a right to make a decision on who they let into their home.

Attacking pet stores takes the blame off the real culprits, bad breeders. It is with blindness to think that shutting down pet stores will eliminate misconduct in the pet ownership world.

REP. GENTILE: We do need you to wrap up, please.

SOFIA DASILVA: Uh-huh. One more sentence, I promise. What shutting down pet stores is really doing is stopping passionate people from educating the public on animal care, eliminating choice from pet ownership and choosing to further postpone legislation that may actually help animal welfare.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Sofia. Chantel Adams, followed by Avanah Burnett. Ashley? Is Ashley here?

ASHLEY KEMPER: Yes.

REP. GENTILE: Okay, Ashley, you were signed up before Chantel?

ASHLEY KEMPER: (Inaudible).

REP. GENTILE: Does it matter?

ASHLEY KEMPER: (Inaudible).

REP. GENTILE: Okay, so Chantel, you're coming up. All right. And then Ashley and then Avanah.

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CHANTEL ADAMS: Hello. It's July 17, 1955 and the gates to the happiest place on earth have just opened, Disneyland. All you see is smiling faces and the sound of laughter fills the air.

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Everything is new, like nothing anyone has seen before. Ed Kunzleman was one of many amongst the crowd, our founder, eyes wide in shock and awe, and then something amazing happened, an idea like no other, he created a place where pets and people matter the most.

My job at Safari Stan's is more than just a job. It's an escape from the worries of tomorrow. It's impossible to walk into our store after hearing our warm greeting and not smile. Every day I meet new people, new families, new children, new pets that all leave me feeling the same way, happy.

It's the most amazing feeling in the world to be able to go into work and make people happy by educating them about animals and allowing them to have a hands-on experience that some people don't have on a regular basis.

We encourage everyone to love on our animals and ask questions and just have fun. Puppies provide companionship, comfort and love. Many customers come in just for a change for puppy kisses, like my two favorite volunteers, Devon and Hayden, who come in every Saturday with their mom, Jessica who is expecting and they just come to have a chance to play with the puppies and socialize with all our animals because they don't have pets at home.

REP. GENTILE: Chantel, we need you to wrap up, please.

CHANTEL ADAMS: All right. When I initially met the, I didn't know that they lost their father or a wife lost her husband. I was just doing my job, just what makes me happy. I was able to make this family's day just a little bit better.

I love my job and the community loves just how passionate we are about our animals and how dedicated we are to enhancing the enjoyment of the human/animal bond.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good evening.

CHANTEL ADAMS: Hello.

REP. MINER: Hello. So when somebody comes in to acquire a puppy, is that the end of the interaction with the store?

CHANTEL ADAMS: No. We make sure that our customers are customers for life. We generally, when people come into play with puppies, they just come to play and then we inform them about where our puppies come from, how we take care of them and usually that in itself just allows our customers to want to come back again and again.

We get a lot of kids who come in because we're very close to Tai Kwando and (inaudible) and they just love it and then we get a chance to actually talk to their parents and they see what we're about and they love it so we have customers for life.

REP. MINER: And so one of the things that I've heard from folks that think stopping this sale of dogs through a pet shop, one of the things that I've heard is that perhaps there's a better relationship, that there's another way to do this that might be more focused on local breeders, that might be more focused on abandoned dogs and cats. Any comment on that?

CHANTEL ADAMS: Absolutely. I do, I, in fact am a rescue mom, myself. All of my cats have been rescued. I've had several rescue dogs.

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REP. MINER: Mine, too.

CHANTEL ADAMS: Absolutely support rescuing any animal whatsoever. However, there are some people, especially people with smaller children, a lot of rescue animals they have history, they have stories, they are set in their ways.

People want to come into a store where there's a variety of puppies that some, they may not know the breed. They like to get educated. They like to have the chance to interact with different breeds that they might not find at a shelter, so.

REP. MINER: So, through you, Madam Chair, in your view, then, it's not mutually exclusive. It's kind of a, I guess, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but it seems to you that the philosophy of providing a good safe home through the process of adoption doesn't necessarily preclude someone from acquiring a dog through a pet shop.

It can't be all one and all the other.

CHANTEL ADAMS: Yeah. Everything's based on preference. Some people prefer to go buy a purebred dog and we give people that option. Some people love to rescue. I love both, so there's people like me out there.

REP. MINER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you.

CHANTEL ADAMS: Thank you. Thank you, Chantel.  
Ashley, followed by Avanah.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Thank you. My name is Ashley Kemper. I'm the Manager of the Safari Stan's Pet Center. I have been with the corporation Pet Land for 15 years. Throughout the years I

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can take price in knowing I have literally changed lives and created families of the furry kind.

I moved to Connecticut to help set up, organize and create Safari Stan's to train, develop and educate the staff to create the human/animal bond and match the right pet with the right customer (inaudible).

The main focus of my position in Connecticut is to teach and show customers the different side of the pet industry and give them a different type of experience within pet stores, show them that we take many measures to care for the health and well being of all of our animals.

We provide a fun, clean, personal atmosphere, something they may not be used to with the level of animal care, presentation and customer service that we provide. You never know who is walking through that door that just lost a family member, a friend or a pet that is in need of puppy kisses and just the kind of environment that will turn a day around.

I came here to turn lives around and show a different side to the pet industry. Myself and many others, customers and staff would be greatly affected if this bill were approved and we want to be given a chance to prove ourselves and change the outlook of the pet industry within the community.

Given that chance, I know we could make a great impact. I've seen it time and time again over the years. I, myself, was hesitant about pet stores when I was younger before starting my career, but throughout the years I've visited several breeders, worked in stores in several states and the atmosphere remains the same.

Healthy, clean and well taken care of, well socialized puppies that I have the honor of saying my pets at home originated from, as well as rescued.

I have nothing to hide at my store, even inviting the public into my kennel to see exactly how and what we do to take care of our pets. Our puppies are weighed, temperatures taken, feeding and stool monitored on a daily, bathe, kennels disinfected and cleaned, given clean toys, mats and blankets every day.

We even have a socialization chart where I make sure every puppy gets out to play and socialize at least five times a day, every day for 15 minutes and sometimes hours.

I understand that not all stores follow the same protocols, procedures, regulations that we are on like any other store that I've ever seen. I invite you to come and check us out and let us change your mind. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Ashley, thank you. Any questions? Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Good evening.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Hi.

REP. MINER: I'm looking on the Internet here while we're having this conversation and I'm seeing an ad in the bargain news for English bulldog puppies out of Arlington Heights, Illinois.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Okay.

REP. MINER: And I guess I'm trying to imagine that if we prohibited retail markets here in the State of Connecticut, if my wife and I and our children or grandchildren had decided that what we wanted was a beautiful nine-week old black

female English bulldog puppy, where would I buy it?

ASHLEY KEMPER: From me, of course.

REP. MINER: Well, if we prohibited you from selling it, where would I buy it?

ASHLEY KEMPER: I don't know. On line, probably. Somewhere, from a breeder. You might have to travel.

REP. MINER: And I guess that's kind of what I'm trying to figure out here. First of all, I made this pretty clear in the past that I'm not necessarily a supporter of determining what your business model is.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. MINER: But having said that, I mean, you know, here I am in just the short span of 15 minutes able to find an English bulldog puppy in Arlington Heights, Illinois and there's nothing in this ad that would lead me to believe that it came from a non-puppy mill.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right. Well, I'm kind of glad that you said English bulldog as a pet. I have English bulldogs.

REP. MINER: That was not prearranged, for the record.

ASHLEY KEMPER: What I would say is, what I would say is, because we do offer a three-year hereditary congenital warranty for them, and English bulldogs have a lot of those problems.

So normally, the problem is when you get them from a breeder you're kind of one and done and out the door. Once you purchase them from them you're done, and so if there's any kind of health risks or anything that you need, you know, if you call them, you've already paid for

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it, you've taken the dog home, there's really nothing they can do after that point.

You know, we give them free vet visits. The vets are on-site, come to see them once a week, so they've already got the bill of health that shows the vaccination records that they've had if anything is wrong with them. That's documented, too. So if there's any kind of upper respiratory they've had, any kind of a problem, it's all available to the customer to see that as well.

And then with the warranty, I mean that pretty much covered them and takes care of things for them. I know that it definitely helped me, because mine personally had teary eye a couple different times and the store paid for its surgery, so, I would rather do that, especially with a (inaudible) puppy like English bulldogs how they can be, and with the health record they can assume that I would know that. I've got some backup with it.

REP. MINER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. GENTILE: Uh-huh. Thank you.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Representative Vicino. Ashley, don't go away.

REP. VICINO: I've got another question for you.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Oh, sure.

REP. VICINO: So if we could not purchase dogs from a pet store, we'd end up going onto the Internet and then it would be wide open on exactly what came into our state.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: Correct? And I'm waiting to hear from the other side. So far it's just been one sided all evening.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Yeah.

REP. VICINO: To hear more about it. I'm learning a lot. What if the rescue dogs were incorporated into your business model, how would that work?

ASHLEY KEMPER: Well, we actually have a section for rescues. We just haven't gotten any in yet. We're brand new. But I've been in several stores in different states and it's actually, it's called Adopt a Pet and we have an adoption section and they just pay a small adoption fee, whatever the rescue that we work with charges kind of thing and they still would get certain warranties that we offer.

We do a training kit with the kennel, crate and stuff, so they actually get the same stuff and same care that the other ones do. So we do do rescues. We just are a brand new store and we haven't got rescues yet, but I have a section for them.

REP. VICINO: So this is for future, a part of your business, bringing in rescue dogs.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Yes. We already have the kennel section up. We've just had our, you know, purebred puppies along with our designer breeds, they call them or hybrids, you know, (inaudible) or whatever they mix them up now.

REP. VICINO: So they've got --

ASHLEY KEMPER: We've just have them in there because we haven't have any rescues yet because we're brand new and we've got that section ready and available for them.

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REP. VICINO: Because somebody earlier mentioned something. If there's pet store businesses that are still in this climate where it's so tough for businesses that you'd have to be doing something right to stay in business.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Uh-huh.

REP. VICINO: And like any other business, if there has been a few problems, and I personally had a problem with a dog in my family.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Okay.

REP. VICINO: So it looks to me like a pet is like a child.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Exactly.

REP. VICINO: And if you had a problem with a pediatrician in your district, everyone would talk about it and there would be a big issue.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: So it looks to me so far, and I'm still waiting to hear from the rest of the group, that a couple of bad apples have done a lot of damage to your industry and it's taken a life of its own.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Yeah.

REP. VICINO: But then I see everyone in this room, or we wouldn't be here at quarter to nine, loves animals.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: And I, myself, have been involved with building a shelter and people that love animals, it's just like a child.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Exactly.

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REP. VICINO: So if there was problems with your child and with a certain medical provider, whatever, it would damage the reputation of your industry.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Very much so.

REP. VICINO: So I think it's something that the whole industry needs to really stay up on and police themselves from some of these evil providers --

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: -- because the alternative would be that you'd end up going on the Internet --

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: -- if you wanted a certain animal. And I know in my children, we have rescue cats. When they wanted a certain cat that was it. You went to the shelter. We brought home a couple of cats.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Right.

REP. VICINO: And they're like children. So if anything ever happened to that it would be, you know, a big issue for them.

So good luck. I've heard a lot of good things. But I'm waiting to hear from the other side.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Okay. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, Ashley.

ASHLEY KEMPER: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Avanah Burnett, followed by Susan Linker.

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AVANAH BURNETT: Hello. My name is Avanah Page Burnett. As a current pet counselor at Safari Sam's Pet Center, animal husbandry is our first

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priority in this company. When I thought about working for Safari Stan's, I was hesitant about it.

All the bad experience I had of pet stores with smells of unchanged bedding and animals that looked deprived of nutrition and animal hygiene, I was being a skeptic.

When I met my boss Togi, he took my mind from hesitation to certainty of (inaudible) career by expressing how he feels about his animals, which he referred them by my babies being first in this company.

When Togi started to explain how he went on breeder trips to visit the puppies and the breeders, I knew that Togi really was serious about his babies and their well being.

When it came to training, I was clear that animal care was first, followed by customer service, then presentation. When it comes to our animals, our pet counselors are dedicated to matching the right pet with the right customer and meeting the needs of both.

For our customers who already have pets, we are dedicated to enhancing their knowledge and enjoyment of the human/animal bond. That is our mission statement that I proudly say and tell people.

When customers come into the store, I am there to educate them on our animals and what they need to live a long, healthy life and also make sure that their new owners understand the values and needs of their new family members.

Safari Stan's Pet Center makes life better not only for our customers, but for their employees, too. Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, Avana. Any questions? If not, thank you very much.

AVANA BURNETT: Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Susan Linker is next followed by Henry Petrofsky.

SUSAN LINKER: Good evening. My name is Susan Linker. I am the CEO of Our Companions' Animal Rescue and I'm also a volunteer with Connecticut Votes for Animals.

I want to thank the Environment Committee for staying here so late and hearing my testimony, and I also wanted to thank the Task Force who studied this issue last year and this year and for making these recommendations. I know a lot of time was spent and it's something I do appreciate.

I'm here testifying in support of S.B. 445. I think there's several laudable recommendations that the Task Force has proposed that have been translated into this bill and I was hoping that the Environment Committee would consider adding one of the provisions and the recommendations from the Task Force, which is the eighth recommendation, which would require that new pet shops that are created be established in the state and only obtain, that was quick, that new pet shops that are established only provide only source their animals through humane sourcing.

And of course, the rest of the community as you're probably aware, would love to see a general phase out of the current pet shops but you know, we would be very pleased with knowing that the 16 that currently sell animals would be the last, thereby no business models get hurt, no one goes out of business, but we can

present a time when there's a more humane standard of care for Connecticut's pet shops.

In fact, the recommendation said, such requirement would eventually establish Connecticut as a model for other states to follow and therefore have a positive effect on the health and welfare of cats and dogs that are brought into the state for purchase for Connecticut residents.

Certainly there are a lot of reputable breeders that are out there. If people want to get a puppy, they can get a puppy. They can go to a purebred breeder and I encourage people to do that if they're looking for a specific animal.

But I think as far as how pet shop stores, basically no reputable breeder would ever give their puppies, sell their puppies to pet shops for resale. I'd love to find one that would do it and if they do, that's an indication that they're not a reputable breeder.

And I know a lot of breeders actually. You know, if we go down the road of violations and indirect or direct, really at the end of the day that doesn't mean anything because these are breeding mills that are in Missouri, Arkansas, you know, Pennsylvania. We can't regulate what goes on there, you know. And that's where these animals are coming from.

So that's our interest is to make sure that we can control what we control in Connecticut. There's no bill we can pass that has to do with changing the regulations and violations of the puppy mills or the breeding facilities, whatever you term to call them, that are out of state. And that's our big consideration here, our big concern.

I also have submitted written testimony in support of 5416, a ban to prohibit gestation crates and of course, opposition to 5080, Sunday hunting bill. So thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, Susan. Representative Vicino.

REP. VICINO: Real quick, through the Chair. What percentage in your opinion of stores sell bad, have had bad puppies sold to the public?

SUSAN LINKER: When you say bad puppies, do you mean sick puppies?

REP. VICINO: People that purchased a puppy and it became sick.

SUSAN KLINKER: Well, I think there would be data on that through the puppy lemon law, but a lot of people who have gotten puppies and they've become sick, they don't report it back because they're afraid the animal is going to be exchanged, or you know, they want to just go to their vet.

We've made some enhancements to the pet lemon law that allows their vet to treat them but still, you know, as far as the actual staff, I could get back to you with that. I don't have that on the top of my head.

REP. VICINO: Well, I'm hoping that I can hear that tonight because I haven't heard it yet. Thank you.

SUSAN LINKER: Okay.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you. Any other questions?

SUSAN LINKER: Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, Susan. Henry Petrofsky is next followed by Steve Primus.

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A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. ALBIS: Oh, Henry's not here, so Steve Primus is next.

STEVE PRIMUS: Good evening and thank you, Chairman. Before I start my testimony, Representative Mushinsky wanted me to talk about Line 59 to 62 of the present bill, and talk about the fact that kittens when they're sold are commonly sold for maybe anywhere between \$130 and \$250 and the \$500 reimbursement for veterinarian fees might be inappropriate and 150 percent might be a more accurate tone.

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So to look at Line 59 to 62. It's more appropriate for dogs than for cats. Okay?

Anyway, Steve Primus, Statewide Pets, nine employees. I've been in the store since 1972, 42 years and Representative if you have any questions, I can answer all of those questions that you had. I understand the topic intimately.

I support the portion of this bill that puts a larger umbrella over other people who sell dogs in the state, especially adoptions and rescues, so to speak.

If they didn't get dogs from a pet shop then the Internet would be a wide open freewheeling place with no regulations, and the rescues are somewhat regulated, but they don't have the same laws that are bound, that the pet shops are bound by.

If I did have a humane source as they say, by selling shelter dogs, first off it would be very difficult for me to sell. Most dogs in the shelter are of pit bull mixed heritage and I don't have cages large enough to support those and most people when we talk about cats that we don't have, we send them to the shelter

and they say, well, we really want a kitten, not an older cat. So we are filling a niche that is necessary.

There is unintended consequences as the lady Representative was talking about. The last bill that you passed required us to buy from USDA kennels. I had in the past before that for more than a decade drove to Pennsylvania, went to family breeders, kitchen breeders and bought dogs from families, but then the legislation was that I had to buy from USDA kennels.

Now USDA you need to have, if you have five or more dogs, you need to have the USDA blanket on them. So if you had less than five dogs I could, I can't buy from them, out-of-state breeders. In state it doesn't matter.

So I was required to buy from USDA kennels three years ago and now I'm faulted from buying from USDA kennels or commercial kennels after you've made a law, so an unintended consequence of that was that.

In conclusion, the choice of an animal for your family should be up to you, not a small but vocal group of extremists. If they had their way, they would like you not to own a dog or an animal and that Americans should not have a chicken in every pot or a hamburger at McDonalds, or milk in your baby's bottle.

If you really want the minority control in Connecticut, then listen to their point of view. Any questions please?

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Steve.

STEVE PRIMUS: You're welcome.

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REP. GENTILE: Thank you, sir. Lauren Kaufman. Is Lauren here? Lauren will be followed by Jane Elles.

LAUREN KAUFMAN: Thank you, Committee, and thank you for staying so late. God bless you all.

My husband and I opened Puppies of Westport to bring joy into the lives of families and we have succeeded at that. Our puppies are in close to 6,000 homes in Connecticut and beyond.

There is no greater satisfaction than getting calls or business from clients who tell us what a positive impact we had on their lives.

I would also like to add that I'm proud to say that because I've had the love of animals since I was a little girl, my daughter has graduated last year from Cornell Vet School number one in her class and she's finishing her internship at Animal Medical Center in New York, and unfortunately will be leaving for Iowa July 1st to become a resident in neuro-surgery. There's only three residencies in this country that does neuro-surgery.

We recently contacted over 1,000 pre-2012 purchasers by phone and even we were thrilled to find that we had a 97 percent satisfaction rate among all those we contacted.

But when we started back in 2006, we never could have imagined that we would encounter the kind of vicious attacks that animal activists have directed at us.

We work very hard to ensure that all of our breeders have clean USDA inspections and that they share our concerns for the health and well being of their puppies and their parents and what have we gotten in return? Name calling, death threats, personal attacks and more that without question rises to the level of a hate

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crime and even the equivalent of the bullying that just about everyone is so quick to condemn for the emotional, excuse me, the emotional toll it takes on the recipient.

Just yesterday, someone wrote on Facebook that I would readily sell a puppy to someone who told me they were taking it home to eat it.

Another wrote that we use drugs to sedate all of our puppies to keep them calm.

In January, a 23-year-old UConn graduate was almost successful at breaking into our store at 2:00 in the morning with the expressed purpose of setting all of our puppies free onto Route 1 at near zero temperatures.

Every single customer gets my cell number and they rarely hesitate to use it. They happen to use it quite a lot. I am there for my customers and more importantly, I am there for all my puppies.

In addition, to seeking ways to ensure the health of puppies sold in pet stores, this Committee should be looking at ways to protect the rights of small business owners throughout the state who are being unfairly and illegally liable by activists who want to impose their will on all the citizens of our state.

The fact that this issue keeps getting raised by a small minority of activists year after year has taken a toll on me and my family. This Committee needs to consider all the facts and understand that the activists will not stop trying to take bite after bite from the apple in the hope that you will eventually surrender and give them what they want just to make them go away.

I am hopeful you will resist the temptation and take a stand against the bullying and other

despicable means that continue to be directed at innocent individuals and businesses that are filling the legitimate needs of thousands of consumers who prefer to get their dogs from the source of their choice. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Lauren. Any questions?  
Thank you.

LAUREN KAUFMAN: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Jane Elles followed by Jerry Pleban.

JANE ELLES: Good evening. My name is Jane Elles. I was recently a part of a group that spent 15 hours over two days at the Connecticut Department of Agriculture reviewing all the certificates of origin submitted by Connecticut puppy stores.

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When the Office of Legislative Research asked the Department if they could identify the fewer than 20 breeders connected to puppy health complaints filed, they responded that they did not have the resources to identify those breeders.

Our time at the department helped us understand the problem. We found over 30,000 certificates from over four years and over 20 stores in 12 cartons. They were only partially sorted with only some date stamped and the vast majority not reviewed.

These certificates were required to both inform the consumer and to enable to state to track where Connecticut pet stores get their puppies.

With just six officers statewide, the department does not have the resources to properly review and act upon these documents. These have consistently been, they have consistently been tasked with greater responsibilities but they have not been

provided with enough resources to do their work both administratively and in the field.

At the end of February the department was still completing 2014 permit and license applications.

While they have all the information in hand, they have yet to compile the number of rescues imported into the state for year ending June, 2013. The latest available number is over 14,000 through June, 2012 and that number is important for this Committee to consider, but it is not available.

If the health and welfare of puppies is important enough for a Task Force study, multiple statutes regulating puppy stores and repeated attempts at further regulations, then it must be important enough to ensure that the department with the responsibilities to enforce the laws have all the resources they need.

I find it hard to understand that the animal activists on the Task Force were opposed to providing any additional resources while all of the puppy stores argued for additional funding.

There was clear evidence of violations within some of the Certificates of Origin we reviewed, which, if pursued, would go a long way to improving the quality of breeders used, but the department is stretched too thin to act upon them.

The most important step I think that this Committee needs to take is to provide the Department of Agriculture with the appropriate resources to enforce the laws that are already enacted. Without that funding, any new regulations are unlikely to achieve the desired results.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Jane. Any questions?  
Thank you for your testimony. Jerry Pleban  
followed by Peter Noel.

JERRY PLEBAN: Good evening. My name is Jerry  
Pleban. I'm the President, Co-Founder of All  
Pet's Club. I started my business 25 years ago  
and now have four locations. I currently  
employ over 90 team members.

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My company was built on service, quality,  
consistency and most of all, respect. I have  
met and exceeded my pet shoo license  
requirements as set forth by the State of  
Connecticut as my inspection reports confirm.

Year after year we have faced an increasing  
demand and restrictions on our business. We  
provide a warranty on the pets that we sell and  
operate in a transparent environment, while  
private breeders, rescues and Internet sellers  
continue to duck regulations and are not  
required to provide any warranty or quality of  
care for the animals they sell.

Despite being licensed and having met quality  
standards, we are continually harassed and  
victimized by extreme activists groups and post  
nasty comments, slanderous lies, mistruths and  
social media, picket our stores.

As personal attacks of this nature constitute  
hate crimes, we can no longer be silent and  
surrender our future of our business and our  
customers to bullying tactics of these groups.

We have thousands of satisfied customers. We  
have provided generations of families with  
their forever pets. The saddest thing for us  
would be to tell our loyal customers that we  
would not be able to provide them with the  
amazing joy that pet ownership brings.

With no licensed breeders in Connecticut, where else can a Connecticut consumer get a pet that is covered under the Connecticut pet lemon law?

Will my customers be forced to meet their new pet in a parking lot, over the Internet or from an unregulated breeder or rescue group with little information about the animal's history, origin or health records?

Two minutes is not enough to cover 25 years of experience in this business. We are all aware that we can do everything humanly possible to ensure the health of our animals but sometimes nature intervenes.

Animals are vulnerable much like human babies. We take every measure to protect them while they are in our care. Although we cannot be responsible for everything, we try to do the very best jobs.

I have never been, it's been a never-ending struggle to continue business in the state with these ever-growing regulations imposed on our industry, often for that which is not our fault or beyond our control.

We must adopt laws for responsible pet ownership not to continue to further regulate an already highly regulated --

REP. GENTILE: Jerry, can you please summarize.

JERRY PLEBAN: Yes, I am. Regulating industry. We are not the problem but rather the part of the solution. Our shelters are not filled with animals we placed in homes. Our state should not put further regulations on pet stores and allow the continued importation of animals from random sources without any consumer protection or warranties.

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These recommendations came from a Task Force that was heavily weighted against pet stores and not even one single Connecticut pet shop was allowed to be on this force.

This is not what we do but who we are. This personal attack of our business by the Task Force is so unfair. Pets make better people and a licensed regulated industry protects everyone.

I don't want to be known for the generation that takes pets out of pet shops. We not only do, we do birthday parties for kids. We entertain our customers. We've been in business for over 25 years. We have care and respect every day when we open our doors.

REP. GENTILE: Jerry, I need you to wrap up, please.

JERRY PLEBAN: Okay. That's all.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions?  
Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Are dogs the only pet that you sell?

JERRY PLEBAN: Oh, we're a full live pet shop. We do birds, fish, reptiles, snakes. We're a full line. We run a 30,000 square foot store in Branford and then we have a 20,000 square foot store in Wallingford and two small locations in Southington and North Windham.

REP. MINER: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Peter Noel followed by Gordon Willard.

PETER NOEL: Happy St. Patrick's Day. Members of the Committee, Representative Gentile, my name is Pete Noel. They call me Puppy Pete in the industry and I proudly own Gentle Jungle Pet

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Store in Meriden, Connecticut, 17 years in business and 15 animal-loving employees.

I ask you to oppose Senate Bill 445. Yogi Bera said it's like déjà vu all over again. Two years ago you debated and passed a new puppy lemon law to protect the customer. Two years ago, even though only seven percent of the puppies acquired come from pet stores.

The other 93 percent from rescues, breeders and Internet have no monetary protection for the customer and the citizens of Connecticut. Ninety-three percent, no protection. Seven percent have protection through pet stores.

You wanted complete disclosure of the breeder to the public, which I agree with. Thus, the full name and address of the breeder was posted clearly on the cage of each puppy. I have an example of that sign in my testimony, on each cage, full name and address.

Anyone with a smart phone can research the breeder in moments and they do all the time in the store. The full name and address of the breeder is also provided to the customer on the certificate of origin, which you guys created. Okay, that's two.

The full name and address of the breeder is also provided on the AKC papers. That's three.

The full name and address of the breeder is also on the breeder's vet health report, which is Connecticut state law, the health report. That's four times the full name and address of the breeder. Any smart phone can research the breeder. There's no surprises.

Full disclosure and monetary protection. That's what the public should have, and I'd say that's pretty fair in today's business world.

What is changed now it's two years later. St. Patrick's Day, we should be out having fun. We're here two years later rewriting the whole thing as the Representative said. What has changed?

Basically one woman's crusade against pet stores. That's what's changed.

The Department of Agriculture still has about 12 complaints against pet stores, per year. Twelve out of 7,000 puppies sold per year. Twelve complaints.

Rescue groups are still trucking in 18,000 dogs a year to Connecticut from unknown origins with unknown health problems into our state. People are being misrepresented by breeders on the Internet.

Now it's two years later --

REP. GENTILE: Can you wrap up, please?

PETER NOEL: Yep. You folks want 150 percent of the purchase price compensation from us on a sixth month health guarantee, 150 percent of the price. No other product is over 100 percent. You all want 150 percent now.

Still, 93 percent of puppies go home unprotected when bought from sources other than pet stores.

Why not protect the customers and citizens of Connecticut on the other 93 percent? Why keep hammering us guys?

Also being proposed and I'll wrap it up is hanging the full USDA report on the cage of each puppy. You wouldn't even be able to see the dog. And as I previously mentioned, full disclosure is made four times in the sales process displayed right on the cage, AKC

report, vet report, everything, full name and address with any smart phone can research it.

So I'm going to hang this right on the face of a little poor Yorkie and the full name of the breeder and the address. It's impractical. The public is currently protected.

Perhaps we should address the 93 percent of transactions that have no protection for the public. Thank you for your time.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Pete. Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. So, if we were to look at the other 93 percent, how possible do you think it is that we could develop a policy where a private breeder, your neighbor, my neighbor has a responsibility of warranting their dog?

PETER NOEL: That's a difficult one. Number one, we get folks in all the time getting shafted on the Internet, and a lot of folks do buy on the Internet. Once again, seven percent is only the pet stores, regulated warranty.

Earlier there was a gentleman over there. The current law says the breeder has to check the puppy, complete health certificate from a health store. A Connecticut vet has to double check it from a pet store. The warranty says they can go to a vet of their choice, the customer, for an independent triple check. Anything wrong, full reimbursement up to \$500. That's the law you guys made two years ago. Triple vet checked and \$500 if anything is wrong. That ain't bad.

Now you all want triple vet check, 150 percent of the purchase price and six months. So I believe we are the regulated part. You could make a thing where there is some warranty from

a breeder or a rescue or something, but currently there is zero folks, zero, so why do you all keep picking on us?

REP. MINER: Well, first of all, you know, many of us didn't draft this legislation but that doesn't mean that we're unsympathetic to its goal.

So I'm trying to make sure that as I listen to the testimony, when somebody throws out that we're only responsible to seven percent.

I was on the Internet as I think I disclosed, when I bought my border collie previously. I traveled around Connecticut and found many circumstances where I didn't feel comfortable acquiring a dog of any kind and left.

So I get what you're saying, but I do, I am concerned about the health and welfare of not only the animal, but also the person that acquires it.

So let's go from the private individual to rescues. What would the mechanism by which we would put in place some kind of a warranty for those that may pay, who knows what the dollar amount is, \$500 for a dog from a rescue. Is there a mechanism that you could envision in place where we could do that? And is there any guarantee that a rescue dog doesn't come from somebody's definition of a puppy mill?

PETER NOEL: My first thought is, this is very interesting and that's an excellent question. I included in my testimony a real nice story. Parade Magazine has in every Sunday paper and every paper and it's about rescue and it was two weeks ago in the paper and this answers your question, and it has an article on a gentleman who trucks up from Louisiana, 65 puppies into Connecticut every two weeks. It's

in my testimony. Sixty-five puppies from Louisiana rescues every two weeks.

All kinds of no kill shelters. Very good deed that the gentleman does, and it talks about how Audie's mother was found pregnant living in a dumpster down in Louisiana and they rescued the puppies. She gave birth to ten puppies and the rescues did sell them to folks in New York and Connecticut and this delivery service brings them up every two weeks.

You can go right on the website. There's a map of the whole thing, it's extraordinary the good deeds that they do.

Then there used to be a radio show called The Rest of the Story. When you go on there, the owner of the delivery service, this gentleman charges \$185 a dog for delivery to Connecticut. He hauls 65 dogs to Connecticut every two weeks. What's 65 times \$185? Anybody here? Twelve thousand dollars tax-free nonprofit every two weeks. That's the delivery service that just trucks them up, in a truck, you can see it right on line and the very kennels in the back.

No one knows where the dogs come from. You're right. They could be puppy farms, they could be anything, so. Twelve thousand dollars, tax free every two weeks. I wish I made that, and they even ask for donations.

On Page 2 of his website and it's in my testimony, you can punch it up, it says no monetary transactions may take place in Connecticut, in bold print, to avert the laws that you guys have made. So the transaction does not take place in Connecticut and he meets them in a McDonald's parking lot, fast food restaurant in Putnam, Connecticut, behind a

Walmart, on and on and on to loving families who adopt the puppies.

When you go to his website it links you to many rescue organizations. This is the rest of the story and a good article and good deeds and good folks.

A puppy under one year of age is \$475. One year to five years, \$375, over five years, \$275. That dog, that shelter dog that gave birth in a dumpster, the ten puppies. This is not made up. This is right in the Parade Magazine in the Sunday paper for everybody. I have it referenced right here.

Those ten dumpster dogs are from an unknown origin, unknown genetics, everything. What did that yield? Four hundred seventy-five dollars a puppy times ten, four thousand seven hundred dollars. The guy makes \$12,000 every two weeks tax free and they go to nice homes here in Connecticut and in bold print on Page 2, no monetary transactions take place in Connecticut. You've got to pay by Pay Pal prior to coming up here, and if you don't like the dog, they will keep your donation.

That's the answer to your question, sir.

REP. MINER: And so you don't see any pathway then to create the same warranty dynamic, I would call it, with law abiding rescues here in Connecticut, because I have had constituents contact me. I mean, this is not just one sided in favor of pet shops, in favor of rescues. I mean, there was a broader story and I'm not unsympathetic to your claim that you are regulated.

Yet, I have had constituents tell me that have paid \$450 for a rescue dog that --

PETER NOEL: Plus \$185 for delivery.

REP. MINER: Well, I don't want to speak to your article, but I'm going to speak just about other circumstances where they have done what they thought was the right thing. They have foregone buying a puppy from a puppy store and gone to a rescue only to be hit with medical bills, issues with the dog once they brought it home and then were unable to get any restitution.

So I mean, that's kind of the dynamic here. Let's say we wanted to take the next step with you and those like you, there still will be people who will be going to that other market that is wholly unregulated, but I'm not hearing you telling me that there's a clear pathway to provide any protection to Connecticut residents either.

PETER NOEL: Well, I'm just big old Puppy Pete and I know all about animals and it's been my passion since I was a kid, sir. I would say in general, my folks used to say, what's good for one is good for all, and that's why my testimony did not center on banning pet stores or grandfathering or anything like that.

Protect 100 percent of the public and 100 percent of the transactions. Would it be possible for you folks to make the lemon law from a breeder? Would it be possible for you folks to make the lemon law apply to a rescue?

If the puppies or dogs are indeed vetted previously, why not? What's the harm? You folks love animals. Who would that harm if things were correct?

So if us guys here have to follow the rules, why shouldn't everybody? It seems like a no brainer. Pet store, breeder or rescue, it's America, free choice, but equal protection for everyone. Very good point, sir.

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REP. MINER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Thank you, Pete.

PETER NOEL: Thank you so much.

REP. GENTILE: Gordon Willard, followed by Karen Laski. Is Gordon here? Okay, Karen.

KAREN LASKI: Hi. Thank you for hearing us and staying so late. I think we've gotten a little off track here. The Task Force was set to talk about the inhuman origins of dogs and I want to remind you that the USDA allows for, in commercial breeding facilities for dogs, never to be taken for a walk, not to socialize with people or other animals, not to see the sun, to be forced to stand continually on grates, to live in crates piled upon each other, to be bred every heat cycle without recovery, to shiver in cold temperatures, to suffer in the heat, to be uncomfortable without grooming, to suffer without veterinary care, to have nothing to look forward to and to be overcome with despair and to be killed after their breeding bodies are spent.

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Now, I wanted to say that I think the pet stores underestimate themselves in being able to transition. There's over 100 pet stores in Connecticut that have made that transition, not to sell dogs or cats.

They can maximize profit with training in their stores, grooming, photography, self-operated pet washes, adoption fee, coordination with advertising local responsible breeders, agility contests, play dates and parties, vet care, wellness programs, support groups, dog sitting and dog daycare. I think they can transition.

And by the way, the laws that the pet owners were boasting about were actually created by you guys and the so-called extremists, the

lemon law and actually the importation law for rescues and the certificates of origin that they now have to display on their cages, which all of them are not by the way.

So I just wanted to, you know, remind you of what the parents of the puppy in the window are going through. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Karen. Any questions? Thank you.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

REP. GENTILE: Oh, I'm sorry.

REP. MINER: No, that's all right. I'll be brief.

REP. GENTILE: I apologize, Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: No, no, not at all. Not at all. I was trying to catch up to your testimony and was looking for it on line, so I'm trying to reconcile what I thought I heard, which was the USDA regulations was it require, or permit the breeding during every heat cycle.

KAREN LASKI: That's legal.

REP. MINER: Does it specifically say that in the regulations?

KAREN LASKI: Owners aren't cited, I mean breeding facilities aren't cited for that, and they do that. Those breeding facilities, they're huge, multi-dog places. The dogs get no individual attention --

REP. MINER: Look, I get it. I get it. Not my idea of the way to live. Not my idea perhaps the way to treat an animal. But I'm trying the best I can every single year with this issue to deal strictly with facts.

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And just as I asked the pet store what their definition or somebody else what the definition of a puppy mill is, I'm trying to understand what the facts are.

When somebody comes here and testifies that it's in the USDA regulations, there's a difference between being a regulation and being someone's practice. Regulations I think restrict what people can do and I think what you're saying, and I don't want to put words in your mouth, is that because it doesn't specifically prohibit it, it's in the regulation.

KAREN LASKI: No. The USDA doesn't force breeding facilities to have the dogs breed every heat cycle, but they allow it.

REP. MINER: And you think they shouldn't?

KAREN LASKI: Of course not.

REP. MINER: All right. Well look, I'm not trying to make a joke here. I'm trying to understand, because it's my understanding that the USDA designation of a puppy mill isn't acceptable either, if I'm correct. That's kind of the basis under which you and some others are taking issue with the fact that if I said it's okay for a pet store to buy a dog from a USDA approved breeder, even that threshold amongst some of us in society is not acceptable.

KAREN LASKI: Correct. Because the Animal Welfare Act is pathetically weak --

REP. MINER: I get it.

KAREN LASKI: -- and that's why they operate by it. Plus, we can operate, we can control within our borders here, but we can't control the USDA.

REP. MINER: I get it, and I think you would agree we can't control the Internet and you can't control who I buy a dog from, really. But I get why you're here and I get what you're after and I just wanted to make sure that I understood what you said. That's all. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

KAREN LASKI: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Representative Sear. Don't go away yet.

REP. SEAR: Thank you. In purely kind of structural or clinical terms, it's like the war on drugs. I mean, you're talking about the puppy mills and all the conditions they go under, and there's a supposition that the outlet for those, there's a connection I guess that there's pet stores, and that's the outlet that allows these puppy mills to do what they do and let's say that's a horrible thing that's going on.

KAREN LASKI: Uh-huh.

REP. SEAR: So if you close the outlet that's going to stop those puppy mills. Is that basically the correlation we're talking about?

KAREN LASKI: Yes. It will eventually, I don't know how many cities have already done it, you know, that cities have had their pet stores transition to a new main model and we would be the first state to do that if we did it and then other states would follow and it would put an end to puppy mills.

REP. SEAR: It's the economics and the science and the commerce is that that's, I'm not saying it's true, but that's your whole point.

KAREN LASKI: Yes. Yes.

REP. SEAR: If the outlet, if the perceived outlet is closed, that that activity will cease.

KAREN LASKI: We think that's the only way it will cease because the USDA regulations allow puppy mills as we know them to operate and have for over half a century.

REP. SEAR: Yeah, I'm not talking about the federal and the puppy mills, but in Connecticut, the law that's before us, or the condition that's before us.

So you either make the restriction such at the outlet, and when I say outlet, I mean the store, you make the restrictions such that that's a filter, that serves as a filter so that some, I'm just trying to connect, so that some Connecticut to the puppy mills that those puppies that are produced in the puppy mills. I just want to know what we're talking about.

Is it the source or is it also the way the animals are treated at the pet stores?

KAREN LASKI: The puppies seem to be doing fine in the pet stores and we do have regulations, welfare regulations for the pet stores, like they were talking about.

REP. SEAR: Okay, so if we consider that that's okay, they're just in the unfortunate situation that they are serving as the outlets, or potentially could, for these puppies that are produced in a very inhumane manner at their source.

KAREN LASKI: Correct.

REP. SEAR: And there's empiric scientific evidence if that outlet is closed that that's going to dry up the source, so to speak.

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KAREN LASKI: I would think so. That makes sense to me and that's why we're speaking on it.

REP. SEAR: Okay. All I'm saying is, I'm wrestling with this and that's kind of the point that I would kind of, that's the point that would have to be made to me.

KAREN LASKI: Uh-huh.

REP. SEAR: And you've defined clearly that's good, you've defined what it is that you're trying to control, what end result you're trying to have and the mechanism for doing that is this proposed legislation to help solve that problem and so for me, and I'm just being open, for me to judge on that issue is me being convinced, you know, that that will indeed achieve your goal.

KAREN LASKI: With the phase out of current 16 pet stores.

REP. SEAR: That will dry up the source, so to speak. I'm not saying it will. I'm just saying that's the case you're making.

KAREN LASKI: Uh-huh. That's the beginning. Uh-huh.

REP. SEAR: Okay, thank you very much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Debbie Purchia, followed by David Proff, Protass?

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DEBBIE PURCHIA: My name is Debbie Purchia. I reside in Meriden, Connecticut. I own an all natural pet supply store in Milldale, Connecticut called Pet Playhouse, which has been a successful business for nine years.

I do not now and have never sold animals of any kind. It is my belief that a successful pet store should focus on the health and well being of all animals and not base its income nor

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operations on cruelty in breeds, such as we see with those selling pets from a puppy mill.

My store has always been rescue friendly and I work very hard with local organizations to save the lives of animals waiting in kill shelters to die. I have sponsored many adoption events resulting in homeless animals being placed into good homes rather than being purchased at a pet store.

Too many puppies are bought on impulse and surrendered into the shelter system a short time later to await their fate. This is especially true around the holidays. I found that adoption days and fund raising events for rescues and animal-related organizations help to increase traffic in the store not only on those days, but help to form repeat business relationships with customers who feel a sense of loyalty and who appreciate the ethical, human and community-minded atmosphere that they are rewarded for their patronage.

It is my hope that you will vote to ban the sale of the puppy mill puppies in the 16 stores within the State of Connecticut that carry them, allowing the focus to shift to placing shelter animals, rather than perpetuating the suffering of the dogs, who are forced to reproduce without the benefit of any kind of quality of life.

I fully support Connecticut Votes for Animals in their efforts and applaud them for the tireless work to change and improve the lives of animals.

Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to share my experiences with you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions?  
Representative Miner.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Could you tell me in the rescue and adoption program that you permit, is there any remuneration that goes to you?

DEBBIE PURCHIA: No.

REP. MINER: So this is all --

DEBBIE PURCHIA: Every, the only thing that we require when any rescue group or anything comes to our store, and we do quite a few adoption events at the store, is that the animals are up to date on their shots. If somebody does, they do not get adopted that day, they need to fill out paperwork and at that point, then later on the rescues will contact them.

But no, I do not get anything in return for that. If people want to buy from us supplies or anything like that, yes. But no, I don't get anything from that. That's why I work with rescues.

REP. MINER: Thank you. Thank you very much.

DEBBIE PURCHIA: Thank you.

REP. MINER: Thank you for being here. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any additional questions? Thank you, Debbie. David Protass? I'm sorry if I'm mispronouncing. It's very difficult to read. David Protass? Okay. Amy Harrell, followed by Laurel Guggler.

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AMY HARRELL: Hello, Representative Gentile, Representative Albis and members of the Committee. Thanks so much for allowing us to testify today. I am president of Connecticut Votes for Animals.

I'd like to thank the Committee, first of all for raising this bill, which contains the Task

Force recommendations and providing the public hearing.

I was privileged to serve on the Task Force, Co-Chaired by the excellent leadership of Representative Kupchick and Senator Duff and am very glad to see that most of the recommendations have been included in this bill.

During the course of its work, the Task Force accumulated compelling evidence that there are severe problems in the pet industry and abuses at every step of the way.

Connecticut pet shops use breeders with long lists of Animal Welfare Act violations, breeders they have not visited in over four years, and even unlicensed breeders. Of over 600 out-of-state breeders used by Connecticut pet shops, a quarter of them, 150 were not licensed.

The pet industry, as you've heard tonight, desperately wants us to view this whole issue as a simple problem of there being a few bad apples, a few unlicensed bad breeders selling to Connecticut pet stores, but this does not begin to describe the real problems of our commercial puppy supply system.

The only law breeders need to follow is the Animal Welfare Act, which as some have said tonight, outlines survival standards, not humane standards. The weakness of the AWA means that even the best breeders with the cleanest inspection reports can still be puppy mills with wire flooring, no bedding, no socialization, no regular veterinary care. These are legal conditions.

We are not dealing with a few bad apples. We are dealing with a system that is under-

regulated, broken, exploitive and horribly cruel.

The single biggest objection I hear from pet shops on moving away from the sale of commercially bred dogs is that they will go out of business. But I have yet to hear of any explanation as to why these shops cannot change and adapt with the modern world.

I remain convinced that the only way to truly ensure our pet shops are selling dogs from humane sources is to work toward stopping the flow of commercially bred dogs in their shops.

Stopping the flow of puppy mill dogs is becoming a mainstream solution in this country, most recently implemented in Chicago. On March 5th, their city council passed an ordinance banning the sale of not just commercially bred dogs but cats and rabbits as well.

And while Connecticut advocates have proposed a five-year grace period, Chicago only allowed one year. Chicago even has more pet shops per person than Connecticut does, and yet the ordinance passed by a vote of 49 to 1.

I am not anti-puppy, anti-pet store or anti-choice. What I am proposing is that it is time we fully acknowledge and take action against the cruelty that is rampant in the pet industry.

I am asking that we move away from the outdated and exploitive models of manufacturing pets like commodities and shipping them out for sale in the retail market.

I am asking, I'm wrapping it up.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you.

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AMY HARRELL: I am asking for passage of legislation that recognizes that the citizens of Connecticut strongly object to having businesses in our state profiting at the expense of innocent lives.

Please add to Senate Bill 445 the grandfathering provision from the Task Force recommendations and also a provision to phase out the sale of commercially bred dogs in our pet shops. Thank you very much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Amy. Laurel Huggler. I apologize again on the pronunciation.

LAUREL HUGGLER: That's all right.

REP. GENTILE: How do you pronounce your name?

LAUREL HUGGLER: Huggler.

REP. GENTILE: Huggler.

LAUREL HUGGLER: I am, work for All Pets Club. I am also a veterinarian technician and I have worked with rescue groups. I will tell you this, that you're not going to debate this act, you know. We take very good care of our puppies in our place but I also will call the breeders and talk to them.

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One of our breeders has American and Canadian champions that have finished their championships both in field trials and in the show ring. They are not going to be treating these dogs incorrectly when they have put all this time into it.

Many of our breeders OFA certified their dogs, which means they have to go through much testing for their hips, their eyes, and different parts of them, anything that would be a problem with the breed of dog that they have.

As a veterinarian technician, I see many more dogs that have been with so-called breeders, breeders that, they have a female dog. They have a male dog. I'm a breeder. They've come. They've had congenital problems. They've had health problems. They come with no vaccinations. ....

I have never seen any cases of heartworm until the last few years where we were starting to bring up more dogs from down south. This is what's coming up. They are not being checked. They are not being taken care of as far as that's concerned.

I've also worked with rescue groups. I have rescue group dogs. I have five rescue dogs at home. One rescue group said this dog was a five-year-old dog that was excellent with children. When they came into our veterinarian's office the dog had bitten her three children in the course of four days and she said they were told the dog was five years old and in checking teeth and everything like this, the dog was ten to eleven years old and had multiple problems.

When the rescue group was contacted with this problem they said, well, if you want to come up the other side of Albany, New York and bring the dog back we might give you your money back.

So these are some of the different problems that are out there. I do believe that our breeders are very good. Yes, there are bad breeders out there.

I know when they say that people just keep breeding their dogs, many times people come in and buy puppies and say, oh, I'm going to breed this dog and make my money back. I will tell them the stories of how it is to have a dog in heat, how to have a dog when it's having

puppies, and many people will say, I don't think I want to do this.

I want people to have their, have a friend in their house for the next 12 to 15 years, whether you do go to rescue or you buy, but people should have that option. Some people don't know what kind of dog they want to buy. They come to the pet store. They have many, many puppies to pick from. We try to sell them the puppy that will fit into their family.

I've had people who have looked at one breed of dog and said, I don't believe that's going to fit in my family. Let's try something else. That's the reason why some people have come back four and five times over the last nine years that I have worked for All Pets Club, and have bought more puppies.

So I really feel that yes, there should be more regulations on the outside part of it and you know, people just are able to do what they have to do. But I do believe the pet stores are doing their job.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions for Laurel? Thank you, Laurel. Ina Blejan, followed by Cindy Socha.

INA BLEJAN: Hi. My name is Ina Blejan and I'm here in support of S.B. 445 and I would like to just support language that would prohibit the sale of commercially bred dogs in new pet stores and the phase out of the commercially bred dogs in the 16 Connecticut pet shops that still sell them.

I'm a registered voter in Glastonbury and I bought a dog from a pet store nine years ago. Within, she was four months old at that time. As any other uninformed person, when I got her I found out within days that she has diarrhea

from a parasite. The vet asked me if she drank water from a swamp, and talking to the sales person from the pet store I found out that yes, I can receive my money back, but she would have to be destroyed.

I refused that. I kept her and I took care of her then as I take care of her now. I paid thousands of dollars on her and actually, I'm here to honor her will to live, going through all of this, and I'm standing right there by her.

She went through numerous infections. She went through kidney failure, and with all of that, when I look at her beautifully framed paper that is her pedigree it shows fancy names for ancestors and parents. It has a name of a breeder listed there but I couldn't find it on the Internet in the store and there is the name of a corporation on her certificate located in another state, and I'm glad that two or three years ago that law was passed that you just mentioned earlier, that actually due to the beautiful work of these people called activists, this law could be passed that allows customers like me to find out the name and to find the breeder of the dog.

The USDA workers work very hard, but we have to help them and this kind of law would only help them. We would support them because we have to phase out this sale of dogs from puppy mills in our state.

As taxpayers in 2012 we paid \$730,000 to reduce the pet over-population euthanizing in municipal centers, 2,700 cats and dogs. The 16 stores have with a phase out, a five year period proposal to adjust and rethink their model of their business, just like any other industries had to adjust when change is necessary.

This is not about killing jobs. This is about saving lives --

REP. GENTILE: Ina, could you wrap up, please.

INA BLEJAN: Sure. And I'm talking about our taxpayers money that goes toward shelters, that goes toward euthanasia, that goes toward euthanasia in municipal shelters because the overflow comes as an origin from the puppy mills.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Ina.

INA BLEJAN: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Cindy Socha, followed by Deb Bresch.

CINDY SOCHA: My name is Cindy Socha. I'm the owner of H-3 Pet Supply in Stratford, Connecticut. We have been in business for almost six years now and we are a store that does not sell any commercially bred animals now will we ever sell any commercially bred animals.

We do work with rescue groups. We do have rescue animals on site that customers can go home with should they like the animal. We deal mostly with cats and small animals and reptiles.

The reason I came here today was to support Senate Bill 445. I would respectfully request, however, that you do consider including the requirements that all new pet shops not be allowed to sell commercial bred dogs and that current pet shops phase out the sale of commercially bred dogs.

I'm going to cut this a little, cut this short. The reason I say this is because I think Senate Bill 445 does not do enough to protect the breeding dogs. Most commercial breeding

kennels are large. They are inhumane to say the least and they keep pets in such deplorable conditions that no decent human being would consider acceptable.

In a perfect world we wouldn't be here today. We wouldn't need government intervention to put an end to this puppy mill crisis. Unfortunately, we do not live in a perfect world and sometimes you as lawmakers need to step in and protect humanity.

The reason to ban the sale of commercially bred puppies and kittens is that is the right thing to do for the sake of humanity. I know of no stronger reason.

Had the pet industry done a better job of policing itself, we would not be sitting here right now at almost ten o'clock at night. This job has been left up to you, unfortunately. I respectfully ask that you meet this challenge and consider the requirements that all new pet shops will not be allowed to sell commercially bred dogs and that current pet shops phase out the sale of commercially bred dogs.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Cindy. Any questions? Representative Miner? Thank you. Deb Bresch, followed by Enid Breakstone.

DEB BRESCH: Good evening. First of all, I'd just like to clear up a misconception about the ASPCA that I believe Hunt's mentioned. We do have, the ASPCA is the oldest humane society in the country. We have a very prominent shelter in New York and we actually do, we know a lot about puppy mills for a number of reasons, not least because we're field responders. We're called in by local law enforcement when things go really bad at these commercial breeding facilities.

They generally have thousands of dogs and local law enforcement authorities can't handle that number of animals and we're called in to assist with the care of those dogs.

We also know specifically about what's happening in Connecticut by virtue of the 2009 law that the Legislature passed, so, you know, this isn't based on innuendo and conjecture. We know by virtue of that law that for instance in 2012, 16 Connecticut pet shops purchased dogs from over 600 mostly mid-west breeders, 156 of those breeders were unlicensed and of the 450 or so USDA licensed breeders, 335 had been cited by the USDA, had been cited by USDA inspectors for violations of the Animal Welfare Act within the prior three years.

Now, I'd like to know, puppies of Westport and I think also Hunt said that they don't buy from breeders with direct violations, meaning those violations that are, you know, pose imminent risk to the health of the animal.

If that's the case, frankly, as worded, S.B. 445 shouldn't worry them because it just refers to direct violations. So if you're not purchasing from breeders with direct violations, that really shouldn't be an issue.

However, I would also like to note there were other reasons why they may not be purchasing from breeders with direct violations. USDA has 120 inspectors. There are almost 2,000 commercial breeding facilities that are licensed. That number is going to go up to about 5,000 licensed breeding facilities. It's a very large universe of breeding facilities and the U.S. Inspector General has said that the USDA is ineffective in policing those breeding facilities.

And if you look in the USDA database at this very moment, there are only about 240 to 300 direct violations that are noted in the last three years for those breeding facilities, and I would hazard to, based on what we know of what's happening at these breeding facilities, based on first-hand, you know, our first-hand inspection of these facilities, when we go into them as well as other USDA records, that they're just not getting cited for those violations, but you can see the pictures from inspectors and you know, they're committing violations without actually being cited for the violations, and that's part of the problem.

That's why we need to do something at the state level to address this problem.

I'd also like to note that there was some sort of suggestion that, in the way these pet stores are sort of hapless entities here. I will finish up. They are not unwitting participants in this cruelty. The cruelty of their business model is inextricably bound up with what they are doing.

They need cheap wares from these commercial breeding facilities in order to turn a profit and that is why we're addressing it through the pet shop, the cruelty through the pet shops.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Debra. Any questions?  
Thank you.

DEB BRESCH: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Enid Breakstone, followed by Jo-Anne Basile.

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ENID BREAKSTONE: Good evening. My name is Enid Breakstone. I'm the Founder and Executive Director of the Queenie Foundation, which is an all volunteer 5013-C humane education and rescue adoption organization.

As a state, we are in the unique position to lead the nation in compassion toward companion dogs. We can stop the sale of dogs from puppy mills or commercial breeders. We have already passed legislation that requires genetically modified food to be labeled and we are on the precipice of passing legislation that would increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour.

The next thing to do is to ban the sale of puppy mill dogs from commercial breeders. We hope that you will include the Task Force recommendation, which would require new pet shops to only obtain their companion animals through humane sourcing.

To be clear, a puppy mill is a large-scale commercial breeding operation where profits are given a higher priority than the well being of the dogs.

As a rescuer, I have firsthand experience with dogs from puppy mills. We had one foster dog who never stopped spinning in circles. No matter how much our behaviorist worked with her, she could not be trained to be still. Eventually, we euthanized her because that was the kindest action to take.

We had other dogs come into our foster system whose fur was so badly matted that all we could do is shave them down to the skin over their entire body. Their nails were so long they were curling over into their pads. These are examples of how dogs are treated at commercial breeding operations.

The Animal Welfare Act provides scant protection for dogs and puppies born and living in puppy mills. For example, breeders are not required to provide veterinary care, exercise, socialization, solid flooring in their cages or

down time between litters. This is particularly heinous because after several years breeding dogs are killed when they are spent.

We are asking that new pet stores be prohibited from selling dogs from commercial breeders. We can show the nation that Connecticut knows compassion and good sense. We've already shown that we care about human health by requiring genetically modified food be labeled and that people earn a living wage.

Let's show that we care about man's and woman's best friend too, because it's the right thing to do.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you, Enid. Jo-Anne Basile, followed by Margaret Wampold.

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JO-ANNE BASILE: Thank you. Representative Gentile, members of the Environment Committee, my name is Jo-Anne Basile and I'm a resident of Guilford, Connecticut. Although I'm speaking on my own behalf, I'm also a proud member of the Connecticut Votes for Animals, ASPCA and HSUS and support their position on this bill.

Just a few points I would like to address first. Unfortunately, Senator Meyer has left, but as a resident of Guilford, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Senator Meyer for his interest and support in the humane treatment of animals.

REP. GENTILE: if I could just interrupt you for a second. Senator Meyer went home ill.

JO-ANNE BASILE: Oh, dear. That's even worse. I'm sorry about that. Well, no, we're in the same church so we keep track of one another. In any event, sorry to hear that, but certainly wanted

to say that his support of the humane treatment of animals does not go without notice.

Secondly, I'm a former owner of a pet shop that specialized in dog and cat food and supplies. At no time, as the others have testified, would I ever consider selling live animals. I did, however, partner with multiple rescues and hosting successful adoption events at my store several times a year. The adoption events were always gratifying and they proved good for business, too. There was always press coverage and the store was known for its compassionate approach to animals.

Because my store was located in a town adjacent to a newly opened store selling puppies, I saw firsthand some of the problems experienced by owners who bought their dogs there.

You've already heard about the unique health issues related to puppy mill puppies and they were more than evident in my area.

But one constant refrain heard when owners learned about the breeding conditions that the puppies they bought, was a vow never to buy from a puppy store again. These owners loved their dogs without a question, but knowing what they know, what they now knew, they didn't want to perpetuate the cruel conditions found in commercial breeding facilities. They knew the only way to stop it was not to buy from these stores again.

Connecticut does have the opportunity to be a leader and take a stance on the inhumane treatment of breeding dogs. If S.B. 445 is enacted with recommended changes, Connecticut will be the first state to say no to puppy mills at the state borders.

Don't let the puppy stores fool you into thinking this is an issue about jobs because it's not. It's about profit at the expense of living creatures while keeping a blind eye to cruel breeding practices.

Be assured that Connecticut's pet stores have options and that the fact that there are only 16 pet shops in the state representing only 10 percent, suggest that it is not nearly the demand the pet industry claims.

There are, okay, sorry. There are 100 stores in the state that already thrive on a successful business model that includes ethical principles. Why do you think stores like Petco, Pet Smart, Value Pet, don't sell companion animals? Trust me, it's not because they don't want to make a profit. These sources chose not to make a business out of selling dogs and cats. Instead, they made a business out of selling good will. They figured it out and I'm convinced that Connecticut's 16 pet stores can do the same.

I am a Connecticut native that returned to the state after being away for 30 years, and I will tell you that living in this state is not easy. Taxes are high and the weather is just awful, but I stay here because Connecticut is one of the few states that does the right thing on so many issues that matter to me.

I urge the Committee to say no to puppy mills and ensure that Connecticut is not party to the abhorrent treatment of animals condoned in states like Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas. Connecticut is better than that and this Committee has the power to ensure that it stays that way. Thank you.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, Jo-Anne. Any questions? If not, thank you. Margaret Wampold is next. Is

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pat/gbr/cd

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

March 17, 2014  
1:00 P.M.

Margaret here? If not, Dick Carty is next on the list.

RICK CARTY: Good evening. It's been a very long day. Happy St. Patty's Day. For the past 14 years, my son Chris and I have operated The Dog House located in Manchester, Connecticut. We have cared for and found homes for over 12,000 puppies and in the last five years, 600 rescue dogs.

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Your Committee may have received some proposals that would require all Connecticut pet shops to sell dogs sourced only from rescues and shelters. Since last October, working with the rescue organizations, we have taken in over 100 dogs.

The majority of these dogs came from shelters. In our experience, puppies obtained from breeders have less health and other issues than our rescue dogs. There are a number of reasons.

Our dog breeders are highly experienced in caring for puppies and follow proper protocols with routine vaccinations prior to the puppies' arrival at a pet store. Most rescue dogs have unknown medical histories and have typically been exposed to other dogs, therefore increasing the risk for exposure to diseases.

Since many rescue dogs have a rough beginning, they tend to have more behavior issues. In most cases, it takes an average two to six months for us to find a good home for our rescue dogs. The majority of customers who come to our store looking for a rescue dog are searching for a younger dog. They are generally not interested in an older mixed breed rescue dog.

If we had to rely on rescue dogs on a source of revenue, we would definitely go out of business.

I will leave you with the following. We are very passionate about the proper care and treatment of all our puppies and dogs. We are committed to a goal of 100 percent customer satisfaction. Connecticut customers want the freedom of choice. Some prefer a rescue dogs and others a purebred puppy. We have zero tolerance for any bad breeders. We always strive to obtain our puppies and rescue dogs from breeders and organizations that care as much about the health and well being of their dogs as we do. I thank you for your time and my wife told me a while ago you're getting too old for this, so be kind to me. It's way past my bedtime.

REP. ALBIS: Thank you, sir. Any questions? All right, thank you very much and it's past all our bedtimes, too, so we appreciate your staying up for us.

RICK CARTY: Can I have my dinner now at the Irish-American Club?

REP. ALBIS: Please go ahead. I wish I could join you. Hollie Lee is next, followed by Susan Casagrande. Is Hollie Lee here?

HOLLIE LEE: Hello. Good evening.

REP. ALBIS: Good evening.

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HOLLIE LEE: My name is Hollie Lee and I am an employee at The Dog House. I have been employed there for a year and I can honestly say I love my job. As a dog lover I have become responsible for many different jobs at The Dog House. I help take care of our puppies and assist our veterinarian every week with her health exams. I also take care of our

customer's dogs who attend our doggie daycare and boarding facility. The Dog House also has a rescue adoption program, which I have become highly involved in. We get rescue dogs both locally and from out-of-state shelters.

We are all dog lovers at The Dog House and we work very hard in making sure all of our dogs receive the best possible care. We do our best to match up the right dog with each customer. Many of our customers are looking for a purebred puppy. We usually have a variety of different breeds for people to choose from. Other customers come in looking for a rescue dog. These dogs are mostly mixed breeds and range from two months to seven years old.

I personally have a purebred boxer named Champ that I bought from The Dog House. My family and I got Champ as a puppy. He's a year old now, healthy, wonderful dog. My three children adore him and he has brought so much happiness to our family.

Again, I and the rest of my co-workers all are dog lovers at The Dog House. We enjoy taking care of all the dogs there, and whether they're a purebred puppy or a rescue dog, it is always very rewarding to watch them go home with their new families. Thanks for your time.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you.

HOLLIE LEE: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Susan Casagrande.

SUSAN CASAGRANDE: Thank you. I came here today just to observe and after viewing the sign-up list, felt that I just as a person would like to speak. My name is Susan Casagrande. I'm from West Hartford and I'm not affiliated with

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any particular group. I'm not in the business and I never would be in that business.

I hear so much of the discussion about the economics involved with phasing out, with phasing out commercially bred dogs from the pet stores, and I also believe that the people that are working there probably do love animals.

I love animals. But what I'm really concerned about is the poor dogs that are not sold, the puppies, the horrible conditions that the breeding stock live with. And if you take the time to do the research you find that the USDA standards, as has been stated previously, they're very minimum basic survival standards. They are not the standard that we should promote.

And to allow the people that are trafficking and that really is what it is, to trafficking the cruelty that this model projects and sustains, it's unconscionable to me that any decent person would allow that to happen and I think Connecticut needs to step up, be the first state to ban this practice and follow the communities like Chicago, Los Angeles and Phoenix. If they can do it there, we can do it here. Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Susan. Any questions? Thank you. House Bill 5416. Annie Hornish, followed by Lisa Colby.

ANNIE HORNISH: Thank you. Representative Gentile and honorable members of the Environment Committee. My name is Annie Hornish and I'm the Connecticut State Director for the Humane Society of the United States. I live in Granby, Connecticut.

I'm here today to testify in support of H.B. 5416, which would ban gestation crates. These

(did not speak)

Margarette (Peggy) L. Wampold  
48 Columbine Road  
Tolland, Connecticut 06084

SB445

November 15, 2013

Dear Task Force Members:

As a resident of the State of Connecticut I have serious concerns about the purpose of a task force set up to stop pet stores from selling puppies obtained from commercial breeders, in favor of dogs obtained from rescue organizations. Before I go any further, I want to tell you that I have no interest in any pet store or commercial breeding facility but I am a resident who loves and owns two dogs and three cats. One dog is a rescue from Bandit's Place and two cats were rescued after some neighbors moved away and left their cats to fend for themselves.

The Hunte Corporation is one of the largest commercial breeding kennels in the country. I have not personally been to their facility, but I have seen pictures of it and talked to people who have gone to see it. From my perspective it is a state of the art facility with excellent animal care. Their animals live in large runs, not the small wire cages as depicted in the e-mail sent out by Connecticut Votes for Animals today. That e-mail urged people to write to the task force in support of banning pet stores from buying their dogs and cats for resale from commercial kennels. Frankly, as a responsible animal owner, I would prefer to be able to buy an animal from the Hunte Corporation with known origins, and known to be free of diseases, than one of unknown origins and life history. I also support the American way of life which includes freedom of choice. I think that every person in this country should have the right to choose where they get an animal from and what kind of animal they want. Many men and woman have died since this country was born to give us that right and to limit our choices is taking away part of our freedom.

This raises another concern of mine and it is bigger than the issue at hand. A member of the task force is the president of Connecticut Votes for Animals and her organization is soliciting letters from the public supporting the ban on sales in pet stores of dogs and cats other than those obtained from a rescue organization, then how is she going to render a fair and impartial recommendation? I always thought that a task force was supposed to be impartial and try to put forth the best recommendation rather than offer an outcome predetermined before the first meeting. Ladies and gentlemen, that is not democracy, but autocracy which is far more dangerous and shameful than any other issue at hand.

At the present time, rescue organizations have been importing animals into the state in large numbers, I believe approximately fourteen thousand last year. There are good people and bad people in every business and activity, but it is rare for legislation to consider banning a whole business category, such as pet stores buying puppies from commercial kennels and restricting them to getting their inventory of animals only from rescue organizations. Typically lawmakers pass laws requiring standards of care and then punish those that do not comply with them. I would support this whole heartedly. Taking the broad brush approach on a categorical basis rather than on the basis of actual practice simply codifies a prejudice and gives less regulated rescue and shelters an unimpeded marketplace advantage over regulated ones. Some rescues and shelters have their own bad apples, operating in deplorable ways. This means that they are not immune from the problem, just immune from most regulation.

The main problem is that there is a greater demand for pets than there is supply from reputable breeders, hobby or commercial. To ban pet stores from selling puppies acquired from well regulated commercial breeding facilities will exacerbate animal welfare problems by driving the pet marketplace underground where it cannot be regulated. The rescues this task force wants to encourage and that would take the place of pet stores getting their animals for resale from well run and much regulated commercial breeders are rarely regulated in any significant way and may also be found to operate in ways that are inhumane and threaten public health and safety. Have you seen the condition of the animals in the trucks hauling the animals in from out of state? How can you condone this and say that you love animals?

Some of these animals being imported into Connecticut from other areas of the country have brought in diseases, not previously known in the state. There recently was a case of a dog coming into Massachusetts as a rescue that was diagnosed having rabies and this month a cat from Georgia ended up in Vermont, also with Rabies. These are not isolated cases. Indeed Rabies is a disease that is nearly always fatal and kills 55,000 people worldwide each year and has been discovered in several rescue dogs in just the last few years. No such incidents have occurred in pet stores for more than 20 years. Again, you are proposing to swap a heavily regulated business for one that is not only unregulated, but brimming with problems.

The importation of animals to this state for the purpose of adoption has become a very lucrative venture for many, especially when they accept payment as a donation and do not pay taxes (unlike the pet stores and hobby breeders that pay taxes on every sale). We have seen in almost every instance in which enterprises start off as altruistic endeavors, but some people later find out that they can make money, and this often leads to cutting corners in order to make even more money. I think that a closer investigation would reveal that some of these rescue operations are so deplorable that they would be closed down immediately if they were operating as do our pet stores which are well regulated. Another issue is that some of the rescue organizations may, if not doing so now, start to breed their own animals for resale to the pet stores if this is approved and goes forward. Will their conditions be any better? As long as there is a profit to be made, people and organizations are going to take advantage of the situation. I would be willing to bet that some of the unsavory commercial breeders (the very ones you want to stop because of their treatment of animals) will quickly reinvent themselves into rescue facilities or organizations and continue on with business as usual. Since these facilities are not located in our state, how are officials going to be able to determine legitimate from illegitimate and who is going to enforce this determination if made?

In addition, please recognize that the horrific images and claims that the anti-pet store activists are showing you are well-orchestrated propaganda tactics designed to emotionalize and blur the issues, which just coincidentally give themselves a competitive market advantage and also a source to solicit and receive donations of money. In recent California hearings images were shown of commercial kennels that had been shut down more than a decade before.

There are bad commercial breeders and there are bad pet stores, but there are also excellent stores and commercial breeders with outstanding facilities and top of the line animal welfare and veterinary standards. If you truly want to help dogs and cats, please recommend a law that requires pet stores to source their animals from places that can be demonstrated to operate with high standards. Please do not swap a pet store that buys from an inspected and regulated breeder, for rescues and shelters whose supply chain that is totally unregulated and often include fly-by-night operators in addition to the good shelters and rescuers we all otherwise support.

My final comment is that we have many laws on the books that are not being consistently enforced now, due to lack of staff and financial backing; why not enforce these laws before we create more? Why create more laws that will be difficult and expensive to enforce? Who is going to go into pet stores on a weekly basis to verify where their dogs and cats came from and who is going to pay for this when we cannot afford the personnel to enforce the laws we have now?

Thank you for your anticipated attention to the points that I have raised. If you would like to contact me for more information I would be most happy to discuss this with you further.

Sincerely yours,

Margarette L. Wampold

860-872-4953

(did not speak)

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Gordon Willard  
SB445



**Testimony for Raised Bill No. 445**

Sen. Meyer, Rep. Gentile, Sen. Maynard, Rep. Albis, Sen. Chapin, Rep. Shaban and other distinguished members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver testimony to your committee. My name is Gordon Willard and I am Executive Director of the Connecticut Humane Society. I am providing testimony in support of HB 445, An Act Concerning Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops.

The Task Force worked for many months to provide guidance and recommendations for legislation that would address the inhumane and exploitive environments within puppy mill breeding operations. We recognize that the Environment Committee considered the Task Force's recommendations in order to craft HB 445. The Connecticut Humane Society sees HB 445 as a way to provide greater clarity with the opportunity through the Department of Agriculture to craft stronger animal care standards for the care of pets in Connecticut pet shops. When improvements can be made that help to protect animals, we can favorably support those improvements.

In looking back at the ongoing issues of inhumane care and treatment of breeding dogs and puppies in commercial puppy mill operations which supply Connecticut pet shops, the effort to end inhumane treatment has a long history:

In March of 1998, the City of New Haven Board of Aldermen asked the State Legislature to enact legislation that would protect puppies from cruel mistreatment by forbidding pet shops from selling young dogs.

In 2005, bill No. 5010, An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Puppies by Pet Shops was proposed. It became clear after consideration over the proposed legislation that the regulation and inspection program administered by the USDA are woefully inadequate to ensure humane

treatment of those animals in commercial breeding operations and it is clear that the State of Connecticut is limited in its ability to affect changes to the USDA's deficiencies.

This issue will resurface again as it has over the years because the nature of making income from pet shops and the nature of caring people within the State of Connecticut will continue to question those practices. The improvements incorporated into HB445 are welcomed yet the original goal set forth in HB No. 5027 from last session to help end inhuman sources of pets sold in Connecticut pet shops will undoubtedly require additional attention as crafted in this bill.

Testimony in Support of SB 445

(did not speak)

Submitted by:

Henry Petrofsky, 131 Four Rod Road, Kensington, Ct 06037  
Director of Finance, Our Companions Animal Rescue  
Board Member, Connecticut Votes for Animals  
March 16, 2014

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this committee with regards to pending legislation SB445, An act concerning certain recommendations of the task force on the sale of cats and dogs from inhumane origins at Connecticut pet shops.

This issue is important enough that I feel compelled to be here today to give testimony before this committee. I believe it is very important for the state to insure that all pets sold in commercial pet stores be sourced from humane origins.

I express my support for the current bill that has been proposed, and there are a lot of good provisions in it, such as new licensing & inspection requirements for in-state breeders, new requirements for pet shops to post information regarding a dogs origin, the posting of USDA inspection reports, and new vet exam requirements. Penalties are also specified for failure to comply with the law.

However to insure that this bill goes far enough to be meaningful, I also would like to see that 2 additional critical provisions be added to the current bill.

1. A provision to prohibit new pet shops from selling commercially bred dogs, and
2. a phase-out the sale of commercially bred dogs in current pet shops.

I am asking for these 2 additional provisions, because I believe that the commercial breeding standards, as set forth by the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) are inadequate and CT's pet shops should not be doing business with commercial breeders.

Examples of the where the AWA breeding standards are inadequate are :

It is legal to keep the indoor temperature no higher than 45 degrees (9 CFR§ 3.2);  
It is legal to provide dogs with bedding only if the indoor or outdoor temperature falls below 50 degrees (9 CFR§ 3.2; 9 CFR § 3.4);

It is legal to expose dogs to artificial light alone and provide no natural light (9 CFR § 3.2);

It is legal to confine a dog 24/7 so that she has no more than six inches of space on all sides (9 CFR §3.6);

It is legal to provide dogs with wire flooring only and no solid flooring (9 CFR §3.6) and to confine dogs in stacked cages (9 CFR §3.6);

It is legal to fail to provide dogs with exercise or any socialization with people or other dogs (9 CFR §3.8).

It is also legal - and typical - for dogs to be bred repeatedly with little or no recovery time between litters and to be killed when "spent" after a few years. "

In closing, thank you for the work that has been done so far to allow this bill to progress as far as it has. I support this bill but I also urge you to strengthen the language in it, by adding the 2 critical provisions previously mentioned. This is needed to help insure that the dogs in our state are adequately protected and not subjected to inhumane conditions.

Testimony Of Lauren Kaufman, Puppies of Westport to the  
Environment Committee on SB 445

My husband and I opened Puppies of Westport to bring joy into the lives of families. And we have succeeded at that. Our puppies are in close to 6000 homes in CT and beyond. There is no greater satisfaction than getting calls or visits from clients who tell us what a positive impact we have had on their lives.

We recently contacted over 1000 pre 2012 purchasers by phone and even we were thrilled to find that we had a 97% satisfaction rate among all those we contacted.

But when we started back in 2006 we never could have imagined that we would encounter the kind of vicious attacks that animal activists have directed at us.

We work very hard to insure that all of our breeders have clean USDA inspections and that they share our concern for the health and well-being of their puppies and their parents. And what have we gotten in return?

Name calling, death threats, personal attacks, and more that without question rises to the level of a hate crime and even the equivalent of the bullying that just about everyone is so quick to condemn for the emotional toll it takes on the recipient.

Just yesterday, someone wrote on Facebook that I would readily sell a puppy to someone who told me they were taking it home to eat it. Another wrote that we use drugs to sedate all of our puppies to keep them calm.

When I said I think of all my puppies as my grandchildren at a task force hearing, another speaker actually had the audacity to ridicule me by asking what grandmother would want to sell all of her grandchildren

In January a 23 year U Conn graduate was almost successful at breaking into our store at 2 in the morning with the express purpose of setting all of our puppies free onto Route 1 at near zero temperatures.

The fact is that the over 33000 Connecticut puppy store purchasers far outnumber all of the animal activists combined.

Every customer gets my cell number and they rarely hesitate to use it. I am there for my customers and more importantly, I am there for all of my puppies.

In addition to seeking ways to insure the health of puppies sold in pet stores, this Committee should be looking at ways to protect the rights of small business owners throughout the state who are being unfairly and illegally libeled by activists who want to impose their will on all of the citizens of our state.

The fact that this issue keeps getting raised by a small minority of activists year after year is taking a toll on me and my family.

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This committee needs to consider all of the facts and understand that the activists will not stop trying to take bite after bite from the apple in the hope that you will eventually surrender and give them what they want just to make them go away.

I am hopeful you will resist that temptation and take a stand against the bullying and other despicable means that continue to be directed at innocent individuals and businesses that are filling the legitimate needs of thousands of consumers who prefer to get their dogs from the source of their choice.

**Testimony Of Jane Elles to the Environment  
Committee on SB 445.**

**I was part of a group that spent 15 hours over two days at the CT Dept. of Agriculture reviewing all of the Certificates of Origin submitted by CT Puppy Stores.**

**When the Office of Legislative Research asked the Dept. if they could identify the fewer than 20 breeders connected to puppy health complaints filed they responded that they did not have the resources to identify those breeders.**

**Our time at the Department helped us understand the problem. We found over 30000 certificates from over four years and over 20 stores in 12 cartons. They were only partially sorted, with only some date stamped, and the vast majority not reviewed.**

**These certificates were required to both inform the consumer and to enable the state to track where CT pet stores get their puppies.**

**With just six officers statewide, the Department doesn't have enough resources to properly review and act upon these documents. They have consistently been tasked with greater responsibilities but they**

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have not been provided with enough resources to do their work both administratively and in the field.

At the end of February, the Department was still completing 2014 permit and license applications.

While they have all the information in hand, they have yet to compile the number of rescues imported into the state for year ending June, 2013. The latest available number is over 14000 through June 2012 and that number is important for this Committee to consider. But it is not available.

If the health and welfare of puppies is important enough for a Task Force Study, multiple statutes regulating puppy stores and repeated attempts at further regulations....  
...then it must be important enough to insure that the Department with the responsibility to enforce the laws have all of the resources they need.

I find it hard to understand that the animal activists on the Task Force were opposed to providing any additional resources while all of the puppy stores argued for additional funding.

There was clear evidence of violations within some of the Certificates of Origin we reviewed, which, if pursued, would go a long way to

improving the quality of breeders used. But the Department is stretched too thin to act upon them.

The most important step that this Committee needs to take is to provide the Department of Agriculture with the appropriate resources to enforce the laws already enacted. Without that funding, any new regulations are unlikely to achieve the desired results.

Pleban 445

Comments Regarding SB 445

My name is Jerry Pleban,. I am President and co-founder of the All Pet's Club. I started my business 25 years ago and now have 4 locations.

I currently employ over 90 team members. My company was built on outstanding standards of care for the pets we are entrusted with, excellent customer service, consistency, quality, and most of all respect. I have met and exceeded my pet shop license requirements as set forth by the state of CT as my inspection reports confirm.

Year after year we have faced ever increasing demands and restrictions on our business. We provide a warranty on the pets that we sell and operate in a transparent environment while private breeders, rescues, and internet sellers continue to duck regulations and are not required to provide any warranty or quality of care for the animals they sell.

Despite being licensed and having met quality standards we are continually harassed and victimized by extremists groups who post nasty comments, slanderous lies and mistruths on social media and picket the front of our stores. As personal attacks of this nature constitute "hate crimes" we can no longer be silent and surrender the future of our business and our customers to the bullying tactics of these groups.

We have thousands of satisfied customers. We have provided generations of families with their forever pets. The saddest thing for us would be to tell our loyal customers that we will not be able to provide them with the amazing joy that pet ownership brings. With no licensed breeders in CT where else can the CT consumer get a pet that is covered by the CT Pet Lemon Law?

Will my customers be forced to meet their new pet in a parking lot, over the internet or from an unregulated breeder or rescue group with little information about the animals history, origin or health records?

Two minutes is not enough to cover 25 years experience in this business. We are well aware that we can do everything humanly possible to insure the health of our animals but sometimes nature intervenes. Animals are vulnerable much like human babies. We can take every measure to protect them while in our care. Although we cannot be responsible for what they are exposed to once they leave us, we are required to provide a warranty for 20 days after they leave our store. We are subject to uphold the Puppy Lemon Law without arbitration, no matter how unreasonable the claim may be. It has been a never ending struggle to continue business in this state with the ever growing regulations imposed

on our industry often for that which is no fault of ours and beyond our control.

We would hope that the State of CT would look to us as a partner in a regulated industry and acknowledge the efforts we make to benefit the animals in our care, the CT consumer and our communities. We provide valuable tax revenues and jobs in our state. The new bill under consideration once again increase the requirements on my business. What other industry is subject to 150% reimbursement of the cost of a purchase? In addition, I am concerned that interstate commerce laws may be violated with the continued increase in regulations under consideration.

We must adopt laws for responsible pet ownership not continue to further regulate an already highly regulated industry that is not the problem but rather part of the solution. Our shelters are not filled with the animals we place in homes. Our state should not put further regulations on pet stores and allow the continued importation of animals from random sources without any consumer protection or warranty.

These recommendations come from a task force that was heavily weighted against pet stores and not even one single CT pet store was allowed representation. This is not what we do but who we are. That is why the demonization of our business by this task force is so personal and unfair.

Pets make better people and a licensed regulated industry protects everyone. I don't want to be known as the generation that takes "Pets" out of Pet Shops.

Thank you.

Noel 445

TOPIC: SALE OF DOGS AND CATS FROM INHUMANE ORIGINS AT CT PET  
SHOPS – BILL SB445

Speaker Testifying: Peter Noel, Owner, Gentle Jungle Pet Store, Meriden, CT  
in business 17 years; 15 employees

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY! Members of the committee, Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, my name is Peter Noel and I proudly own Gentle Jungle Pet Store in Meriden, CT. I ask you to oppose Senate Bill 445. Yogi Berra said "It's like Déjà vu all over again." Two years ago you debated and passed a new puppy lemon law, even though only 7 % of the puppies acquired come from pet stores. The other 93 % from rescues, breeders and internet have no monetary protection for the consumer. You wanted complete disclosure of the breeder to the public, thus the full name and address of the breeder was posted clearly on the cage of each puppy; anyone with a Smart Phone can research the breeder in moments. The full name and address of the breeder is also provided to the customer on the Certificate of Origin, AKC papers, and breeders vet health report. Full disclosure and monetary protection... I'd say that's pretty fair in today's world of business. What has changed? Basically, one woman's crusade against pet stores. Department of Agriculture still has about 12 complaints against pet stores per year out of 7,000 puppies sold. Rescue groups are still trucking in about 18,000 dogs from unknown origins with unknown health problems into our state per year. People are still being misrepresented by breeders on the internet. Now, two years later, a new puppy lemon law is being considered with up to 150% compensation! No other product warrantee exceeds 100 % and still the other 93% of puppies go home unprotected when bought from other sources besides pet stores!!! Also, being proposed is hanging the full USDA report on the cage of each puppy, even though it's ALREADY readily available. The breeder's information is already provided in 4 different ways as listed above. Plus, if this report had to be posted hanging on the cage, you would not even be able to see the puppy!

The public is protected on our 7 % of puppies provided. There is already complete disclosure. You were correct in your legislation that passed just two short years ago. I ask you to perhaps address the other 93 % of puppies and customers that need legislative protection.

A true animal lover,

Peter Noel

Presently Used CAGE CARD  
ON FRONT OF EVERY PUPPY

English Bulldog 209F

**Raised with love by:**

Peter Noel

45 North Ridge Dr

Middlebury Ct 06762

Hunte Corporation  
121 N. Royhill Blvd.  
Goodman, MO 64843  
USDA# 43-B-0123

Canterbury Tails  
875 Dakota Rd.  
McPherson, KS 67460  
USDA# 48-B-0319

Mid America  
11474 Hammer Rd.  
Neosho, MO 64850  
USDA# 43-B-3634

Rokenn Enterprises  
137 N. 110th Rd.  
Delphos, KS 67436  
USDA# 48-B-018

Fulton Enterprises  
603 S. Broadway  
Alden, MN 56009  
USDA# 41-B-0262

## Certificate of Origin

Gentle Jungle, Inc.  
470 Lewis Ave.  
Meriden, CT 06451  
203-238-0507

Date of Sale: \_\_\_\_\_ Collar#: 209F

Breed: English Bulldog

Breeder's Name: Peter Noel

Street: 45 North Ridge Dr.

City: Middlebury State: CT Zip: 06762

## Delivered by:

Hunte Corporation  
121 N. Royhill Blvd.  
Goodman, MO 64843  
USDA# 43-B-0123

Mid America  
11474 Hammer Rd.  
Neosho, MO 64850  
USDA# 43-B-3634

Canterbury Tails  
875 Dakota Rd.  
McPherson, KS 67460  
USDA# 48-B-0319

Pinnacle Pet  
P.O. Box 852  
Neosho, MO 64850  
USDA# 43-B3725

Rokenn Enterprises  
137 N. 110<sup>th</sup> Rd.  
Delphos, KS 67436  
USDA# 48-B-018

Fulton Enterprises  
603 S. Broadway  
Alden, MN 56009  
USDA# 41-B-0262

Fax to: 860-713-2515

## DID YOU KNOW AT THE GENTLE JUNGLE...

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL PUPPIES AND KITTENS ARE VETERINARIAN  
CHECKED EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL PUPPIES AND KITTENS ARE UP-TO-DATE  
ON VACCINATIONS BASED ON THE VETS  
SCHEDULE FOR EACH PET**

**\*\*\*\*\*IF YOU DO NOT SEE THE DOG BREED YOU  
LIKE WITHIN THE STORE, PUPPIES CAN BE  
SPECIAL ORDERED**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL PUPPY CAGES ARE VENTILATED TO  
MAINTAIN HEALTH**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL PETS SOLD WITHIN OUR STORE  
COME WITH A WARRANTY**

**\*\*\*\*\*WE ARE PROUD THAT WE HAVE PLACED  
OVER 1,000 DOMESTIC KITTENS IN LOVING  
HOMES**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL PETS ARE FED, WATERED AND CARED  
FOR WITHIN OUR FACILITY UNTIL WE FIND  
THEM A LOVING HOME!**

**\*\*\*\*\*OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM HAS EXTENSIVE  
KNOWLEDGE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE  
ANIMALS WE CARRY WITHIN OUR FACILITY  
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS!**

**\*\*\*\*\*WE FEED OUR DOGS/CATS A VERY HEALTHY  
BRAND OF ANIMAL FOOD WITH ZERO BI-PRODUCTS**

## American Stories

It's 2 a.m. and I'm trying unsuccessfully to sleep in the loft of a tractor trailer parked outside a motel in Allentown, Pa. A 12-week-old black lab is curled up inches from my face, and below us, 64 more dogs are resting peacefully in kennels stacked two or three high and secured along the truck's walls. Our driver, Greg Mahle, is sound asleep in the middle of the floor.

Mahle is used to sleeping in his truck: Twice a month he leaves his wife and home in Zanesville, Ohio, to drive a familiar route through the Deep South, making stops in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama to pick up dogs that have been removed from "death row" at high-kill shelters by local rescue groups. Then Mahle turns north toward New England, where there is higher demand for shelter dogs.

Over the past nine years, Mahle has helped save tens of thousands of dogs. His transport service, Rescue Road Trips, just about breaks even. (A portion of adoption fees covers his costs.) But Mahle, who ran a family restaurant in his prior life, doesn't do it for the money: "I turned 51 last year, and I am happier now than I have been in my whole life."

At designated spots along Mahle's route, volunteers meet his rig for "walk-potty-snack" breaks. Last night as he pulled into the Comfort Inn parking lot, two dozen "Allentown Angels" had gathered, as they do every other Friday night



Mahle with Audi before she was delivered to her new family. See more photos at [parade.com/rescue](http://parade.com/rescue).

DID YOU ADOPT A RESCUE DOG? POST A PIC AT [FACEBOOK.COM/PARANEMAS](http://FACEBOOK.COM/PARANEMAS).

## Homeward Bound

*One dedicated man hits the road in a 12-wheel rig on a mission to save precious pups* By Peter Zheutlin

around 7 p.m. The volunteers are drawn to Mahle's mission, as well as to the man himself: "His heart is as big as a Volkswagen," group coordinator Keith Remaly told me.

The puppy snoozing in the kennel near my head is Audi. She's on her way to the Dooley family of Connecticut. Teenagers Meagan and Lauren fell in love with Audi when they saw her photo on PetFinder.com, a database used by rescue groups such as Labs4Rescue, which arranged Audi's adoption.

Audi's mother was found pregnant, living by a dumpster

in the small city of New Iberia, La. When two Labs4Rescue volunteers learned she was to be euthanized at the parish animal control facility, they rushed to get her; she delivered several of her 11 puppies in the backseat of their SUV. [Editor's note: All 12 dogs have since made the trip north with Mahle.]

But for every dog Mahle delivers, many more are euthanized. Southern shelters are overwhelmed by strays, says Ken Toth, president of the

Humane Society of Central Louisiana, because spaying and neutering are not common practice. In rural areas, backyard breeders produce more puppies than they can sell; many dogs are left to fend for themselves. In Louisiana in 2010 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), 32 shelters reported taking in 69,540 dogs; 43,278 of them were put down, according to Maddie's Fund, a nonprofit that tracks canine euthanasia statistics.

At sunrise, Mahle fires up the truck and we push off for New York and Connecticut, where dozens of families are waiting in parking lots to welcome our passengers. At every stop, Mahle leaps out of the cab and shouts, "Hello! I'm Greg! Is everyone excited?"

When we find the Dooleys, Mahle takes Audi from her crate and hands her to the girls, full of pent-up puppy energy, Audi squirms to lick their faces. For Audi, a long and difficult journey is ending as one filled with love begins.

Mahle has witnessed this scene countless times, but it never gets old. As he rolls up to a fast-food restaurant in Putnam, Conn., the final stop of the day, some 50 people burst into applause. "A few weeks ago these dogs were going to die," Mahle says. "Now watch. The truck doors open, light pours in, and each one goes into the arms of a loving family. This is heaven." □

To make a donation, visit [rescueroadtrips.com](http://rescueroadtrips.com).

## CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INDEX

### WRITTEN ORDERS AND FINAL DECISIONS

DATE ISSUED	NAME	WRITTEN ORDER	FINAL DECISION	DESCRIPTION	STATUTORY REFERENCE	CASE NUMBER /TOWN
7/20/2011	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
7/24/2011	Stillings, Victoria		✓	Dog Disposal Order "Buddy"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Milford, CT
8/11/2011	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. § 22-279	Waterbury, CT
8/18/2011	Simon Foundation	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Bloomfield, CT
9/14/2011	Perkins, Mark Sr.		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	N. Stonington, CT
9/14/2011	Perkins, Mark Jr.		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	N. Stonington, CT
9/14/2011	Perkins, Courttland		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	N. Stonington, CT
9/14/2011	French, Eric Sr.		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	N. Stonington, CT
9/14/2011	French, Eric Jr.		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	N. Stonington, CT
9/14/2011	Chickering, Charles		✓	Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	Walpole, NH
10/3/2011	Vinuet-Reyes, Dianna		✓	Dog Disposal Order "Destiny"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Newington, CT
10/20/2011	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. § 22-279	Waterbury, CT
10/26/2011	Gionet, Patricia A.	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. § 22-279	Waterford, CT
11/17/2011	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. § 22-279	Waterbury, CT
11/29/2011	Simms, Lester		✓	Dog Disposal Order "Chance"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Bristol, CT
12/23/2011	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
2/3/2012	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
2/9/2012	Watertown Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Watertown, CT
2/20/2012	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
2/27/2012	Benjamin, Jesse		✓	Dog Disposal Order "Rex"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Lisbon, CT
3/2/2012	Wolcott Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Wolcott, CT

3/3/2012	New Britain Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	New Britain, CT
3/16/2012	Watertown Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Watertown, CT
3/16/2012	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
3/21/2012	New Britain Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	New Britain, CT
3/22/2012	Meriden Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Meriden, CT
4/16/2012	Wolcott Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Wolcott, CT
4/26/2012	Johnson, Janet	✓	✓	Dog Disposal Order "Oran"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Enfield, CT
5/1/2012	Onopa, Remi	✓	✓	Dog Restraint Order "Ginger"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Meriden, CT
5/19/2012	Montville Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Montville, CT
8/13/2012	Ledyard Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Ledyard, CT
10/19/2012	Smith, Bradshaw	✓	✓	Dog Restraint and Disposal Order "Dominique"	C.G.S. §22-358	Windsor, CT
2/6/2013	Bruell, Michael	✓	✓	Dog Disposal Order - "Puppy"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Putnam, CT
2/27/2013	Breen, Linda	✓	✓	Dog Restraint Order - "Rudy"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Suffield, CT
2/28/2013	Avery, Michelle	✓	✓	Dog Disposal Order - "Stella Blue"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Colchester, CT
3/8/2013	Gary, Scott	✓	✓	Dog Restraint Order - "Diesel"	C.G.S. § 22-358	Plymouth, CT
3/15/2013	The Dog House Pet Shop	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Manchester, CT
3/20/2013	New Britain Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	New Britain, CT
5/24/2013	North Haven Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	North Haven, CT
5/30/2013	Waterbury Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Waterbury, CT
6/10/2013	New Britain Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	New Britain, CT
6/21/2013	Cheshire Municipal Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Cheshire, CT
1/3/2013	Cuzzocreo, Alex	✓		Quarantine Order - Cattle Import	C.G.S. §22-279	Orange, CT
9/26/2013	Miller, George Jr.	✓		Drawing Contest Drug Testing	C.G.S. § 22-126a	Colchester, CT
10/9/2013	Rousseau, William	✓	✓	Bite Quarantine - dog "Sundance" 14 d off property	C.G.S. § 22-358	Windsor Locks, CT
10/11/2013	Ken Bouquillon	✓		Quarantine order - sheep import	C.G.S. §22-279	Newtown, CT
11/26/2013	Bridgeport Dog Pound	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Bridgeport, CT
12/12/2013	All Pets Club	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Wallingford, CT
12/12/2013	All Pets Club	✓		Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. §22-279	Brantford, CT

1/9/2014	Waterbury Municipal Pound	V	2014	Quarantine Order - Parvovirus	C.G.S. 522-279	Waterbury, CT
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Laski 445

**Testimony for SB 445- Pet store recommendations, HB 5416-Gestation crates  
and HB 5080-Sunday hunting**

Karen Laski  
279 Fern St.  
Manchester, CT 06040

Connecticut has the chance to sever connections with horrific puppy mills. There are not just a few bad actors in the commercial breeding business. We have seen behind the scenes thanks to a CT law mandating that pet stores post certificates of origin for puppies. Over 95% of breeders that are used by CT pet stores operate horrific dog factories. People in CT are ready for the remaining pet stores to phase into a humane model because parents of commercially bred puppies are condemned to an existence that none of us would wish for any dog.

***..It's legal in commercial breeding facilities for dogs:***

- ..To never be taken for a walk.***
- ..Not to socialize with people or other animals.***
- ..Not to see the sun.***
- ..To be forced to stand continually on grates.***
- ..To live in crates piled upon each other.***
- ..To be bred every heat cycle without recovery.***
- ..To shiver in cold temperatures.***
- ..To suffer in the heat.***
- ..To be uncomfortable without grooming.***
- ..To suffer without veterinary care (facilities are required by AWA to have to have a Vet plan in place) but most times, dogs are suffering from a myriad of ailments due to neglect.***
- ..To have nothing to look forward to and be overcome with despair.***
- ..To be killed after their breeding bodies are spent.***

If the USDA visits a facility and happens upon a dog who is tortured beyond what the law allows, then the owner may be cited for a violation. Most times they go on, business as usual and the hideous cruelty above still continues. USDA workers have their hands tied by the pathetically weak standards of the Animal Welfare Act.

We care about these suffering parents as proven by the task force. It's time to be responsible and make a true difference for dogs caught in this cruel, archaic system.

Over 100 pet stores in CT have made the humane decision and are thriving.

Sixteen more can step up and stop profiting from exploiting these innocent dogs.

There are many ways for them to grow their businesses, such as:

Training

Grooming

Photography

Self operated pet wash

Adoption fees

Coordination with advertising local responsible breeders

Agility contests

Playdates and parties

Vet care

Wellness programs

Support groups

Dog sitting

Dog daycare

**Please include language to phase-out the sale of commercially-bred dogs in CT's current 16 pet stores**

HB5080

I support House Bill 5416 to ban cruel gestation crates for pigs and I oppose the addition of Sunday for hunting.

Thank you,  
Karen Laski

Purchia  
445

My name is Debbie Purchia. I reside in Meriden, CT. I own an all natural pet supply store in Milldale, CT called Pet Playhouse, which has been a successful business for 9 years. I do not now and have never sold animals of any kind. It is my belief that a successful pet store should focus on the health and well-being of all animals, and not base its income nor operations on cruelty and greed such as we see with those selling pets from a puppy mill.

My store has always been rescue friendly and I work very hard with local organizations to save the lives of animals waiting in kill shelters to die. I have sponsored many adoption events resulting in homeless animals being placed into good homes rather than being purchased at a pet store.

Too many puppies are bought on impulse and surrendered into the shelter system a short time later to await their fate. This is especially true around the holidays. I have found that adoption days and fundraising events for rescues and animal related organizations help to increase traffic in the store not only on those days, but help to form repeat business relationships with customers who feel a sense of loyalty and who appreciate the ethical, humane and community-minded atmosphere that they are rewarded with for their patronage .

It is my hope that you will vote to ban the sale of puppy mill puppies in the 16 stores within the state of Connecticut that carry them, allowing the focus to shift to placing shelter animals rather than perpetuating the suffering of the dogs in mills who are forced to reproduce without the benefit of any kind of quality of life.

I fully support Connecticut Votes for Animals in their efforts and applaud them for their tireless work to change and improve the lives of animals.

Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to share my experience with you today.

Blejan 445

**Testimony Concerning S. B. 445****Ina Blejan**

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of S.B. 445 An act concerning certain recommendations of the task force on the sale of cats and dogs from inhumane origins at Connecticut pet shops. I ask you to support language that would:

1. Prohibit the sale of commercially-bred dogs in new pet shops, and
2. Phase-out the sale of commercially-bred-dogs in the 16 Connecticut pet shops that still sell them.

I am a registered voter in Glastonbury and I am here to honor my dog's will to live. My dog is my friend. I am here to let you know her story. I went like any other uninformed person to a local pet store in CT and got my Christmas present: a puppy. She was 4 months old at the time and within days of having her, she was diagnosed with diarrhea due to a parasite. The vet told me she probably drank water from a swamp. Talking to the salesperson from the pet store, I was told that I can give her back to them and be refunded but she would have to be destroyed. Destroyed? Yes, killed. I refused, horrified at the suggestion. I took care of her then as I do to this day. In the last 9 years, and thousands of dollars later, the array of diagnosis she went through is amazing: numerous ear infections, infected paws, diarrhea, vomiting, allergies, anxiety, kidney failure, which she survived, urinary tract infections and one surgery. She went through numerous courses of antibiotics and doctor's visits. I looked at the beautifully framed paper that is called her pedigree that shows fancy names as her parents and ancestors. The breeder listed cannot be found through the store or internet. But, there is a name of a corporation on her certificate, located in another state.

One of my friends lost her dog when he was only 4 years old due to bleeding. Doctors could not diagnose the reason and despite numerous treatments he died. My friend decided to adopt later a dog from a shelter and she actually told me she went through rigorous checking done by the shelter. The shelter was more concerned with the welfare of the puppy than anything else. That impressed her so much that now she told me and others, there is no other way for us but to adopt from rescue shelters. She would never go back to a pet store.

These unfortunate situations are possible because the Animal Welfare Act of 2009 does not go far enough in protecting the life of dogs in puppy mills. While I do understand how hard the USDA workers work, I can assure you than we can help them by supporting phasing out the sale of dogs from puppy mills in our state.

We paid \$730,000 in 2012 to reduce the pet overpopulation problem. We euthanized in CT municipal shelters 2,700 cats and dogs in 2012.

The 16 stores that still sell pets from puppy mills will have 5 years to adjust and rethink the model of their business...just like any other industry has to adjust when change is necessary. This is not about killing jobs; this is about saving lives and our state's economy.

Now, as an informed constituent, am letting you know that there is an overflow of commercially-bred puppies in our state. Please support the ban of their sale in our state. There are already cities in US and Canada, among them San Diego, Los Angeles, Chicago that already have ordinances in place to ban the sale of dogs from puppy mills. Let Connecticut be the first state to do this as a state law. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Ina Blejan

Glastonbury, CT.

001680

Socha 445  
5416  
5080

March 17, 2014

RE: Senate Bill #445

Dear Members of the Environment Committee:

I am the owner of a pet supply store located in Stratford, CT. We have been in business for over 6 years and have never, nor will we ever, sell any commercially bred animal in our store. We do have rescued animals available for adoption in the store (primarily cats, small animals and reptiles). Our model of rescued versus commercially bred animals has been extremely successful for us as it generates a tremendous amount of goodwill within the community and has provided us an extremely loyal customer base. I am here today to voice my support for SB 445. I would, however, respectfully request that you include the requirements that 1) all new pet shops not be allowed to sell commercially bred dogs and 2) that current pet shops phase out the sale of commercially bred dogs.

I feel that what SB 445 fails to do is to protect the welfare of the breeding dogs that are forced to produce litter after litter, often in unsanitary and inhumane conditions. The winners, if our great state was to be the first to enact a ban on the sales of commercially bred puppies and kittens, would be the animals who are forced to live in these deplorable conditions that no decent human being would consider acceptable.

While it is challenging to match the amount of money and manpower the pet industry is willing to expend to protect this segment of the industry, this challenge must be met. They throw out threats of business closings and job losses that would strike fear in the minds of anyone during these trying economic times. I think my store, as well as over 100 other stores here in the State of Connecticut, are proof that the sales of commercially bred dogs are not necessary to succeed in this industry. I encourage you to keep an open mind about the validity of the claims of job losses that you will hear from those that would like to protect this highly profitable segment of the pet industry.

In a perfect world, government intervention would be completely unnecessary here. In a perfect world, people and animals would not be taken advantage of for the sake of profits. Unfortunately we do not live in a perfect world and sometimes lawmakers must step in and protect humanity. Lawmakers are the ones who must do the right thing whether it is popular or not. The reason to ban the sale of commercially bred puppies and kittens is that it is the right thing to do for the sake of humanity. I know of no stronger reason. Had the pet industry done a better job of policing itself, none of us would be sitting here right now. This job has been left up to you. I respectfully ask that you meet this challenge.

In addition I would like to also state that I

- Support HB 5416 (Section 2), which would ban gestation crates
- Oppose HB 5080, which would allow Sunday hunting

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing me to share my views.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Socha, Owner  
H3 Pet Supply  
475 Hawley Lane  
Stratford, CT 06614  
203-690-1400



Debora M. Bresch Esq.  
 Senior State Legislative Director  
 MidAtlantic Region  
 Government Relations  
[debora\\_bresch@aspca.org](mailto:debora_bresch@aspca.org)  
 P/F 908 232 0364  
 Cell 917 679 1008

Bresch  
 445

**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 445**  
**AAC Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops**

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), as the oldest humane society in the country, and on behalf of our over 20,000 Connecticut supporters, urges the Joint Environment Committee to favorably report S.B. 445 (AAC Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops ).

We respectfully request that the Committee pass a joint favorable substitute bill that.

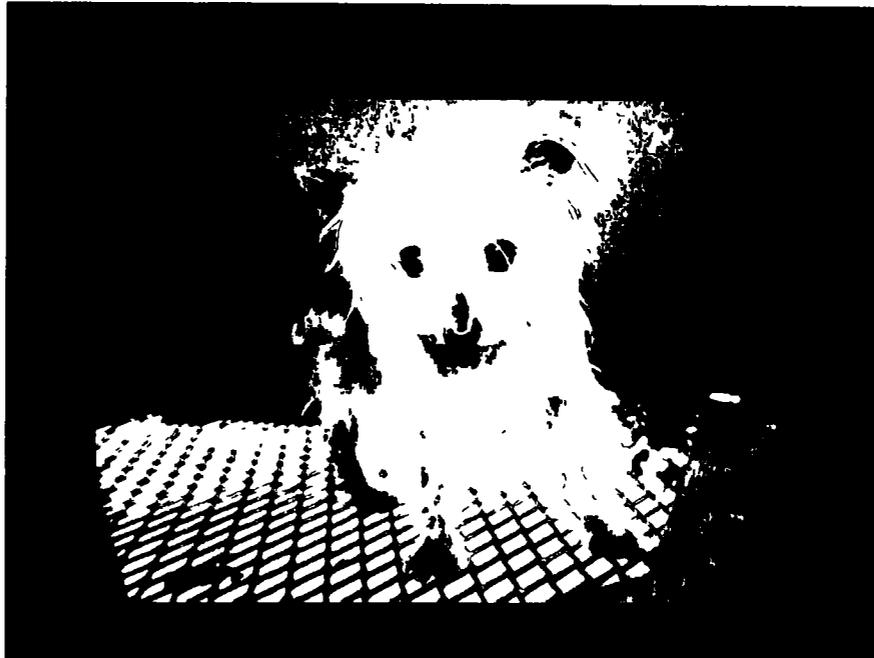
- (1) makes the following amendments to the incorporated Task Force recommendations;
- (2) incorporates the omitted Task Force recommendation that would prohibit the sale of puppy mill dogs in future pet stores, and
- (3) also provides for the phase-out of the sale of puppy mill dogs in the 16 pet shops oddly still selling them despite the objectively inhumane treatment of dogs who are sadly victims of the puppy mill trade:

Amendments to Incorporated Task Force Recommendations

1. In Subsection 2(b), clarify that the proposed penalty for a pet shop selling a sick dog or cat to a consumer, the penalty is either five hundred dollars OR one hundred fifty percent of the purchase price, whichever is greater.
2. In Subsection 2(c), state that the fine for selling a sick dog could be at least one hundred fifty percent of the purchase price of such dog or cat. The potential fine should at least match the amount that a pet shop may have to pay a consumer for a sick dog or cat -- thereby preventing a pet shop from choosing to pay a lower fine rather than reimbursing the consumer.
3. In Subsection 3(c), state that pet shop licensees should post the 2 prior years of USDA breeder inspection reports and make them available to the public.
4. In Subsection 4(b), clarify that all breeders who sell to pet shops, whether in-state or out-of-state, must be licensed by the USDA. Also clarify that any third party person, firm, or corporation from which a pet shop buys a dog must be licensed by the USDA and cannot have obtained such dog, either directly or indirectly, from a breeder with the prohibited quotient of direct/indirect violations.

(1) Incorporate Omitted Task Force Recommendation to Prohibit the Sale of Puppy Mill Dogs in Future Pet Stores, and (2) Phase-Out the Sale of Puppy Mill Dogs in the 16 Pet Shops That Still Sell Them

5. Add a new section 6 to require pet shop license applicants to include additional identifying information in their license applications.
6. Add a new section 7 that prohibits new pet shop licensees from selling commercially-bred dogs and requires current pet shop licensees to phase out such sales by July 1, 2019. Clarifies that "new pet shop licensee" includes any of the enumerated individuals/entities not identified in a pet shop license application approved prior to the bill's effective date.



## What's Happening in Connecticut

- The Connecticut Legislature's *Task Force Concerning the Sale of Cats & Dogs at CT Pet Shops from Inhumane Origins* completed its work on Friday, January 31, 2014.
- Among other recommendations, the Task Force proposed an immediate ban on the commercial sale of puppies in newly licensed pet shops.
- The animal welfare organizations represented on the Task Force – the ASPCA, CT Votes for Animals (CVA), and The HSUS – also seek the phase-out of the sale of commercially-bred dogs in the 16 pet shops still selling them (100+ Connecticut pet shops do not sell dogs.)

## S.B. 445 – AAC Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at CT Pet Shops *(S.B. 445) (with no bill number)*

- S.B. 445 partially tracks the Task Force recommendations
  - E.g., improved lemon law; potentially harder for breeders with USDA violations to sell to pet shops
    - The ASPCA urges revision of a few provisions
  - No ban on the commercial sale of puppies in newly licensed pet shops
    - The ASPCA urges reinstatement of this Task Force recommendation.
- No phase-out of the sale of commercially-bred dogs in the 16 pet shops still selling them.
  - The ASPCA urges addition of this provision.

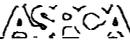
## Connecticut Pet Shop Stats

- In 2009, Connecticut enacted a law requiring pet shops to identify the hundreds of breeders (and any brokers) supplying their dogs.
- In 2012, 16 Connecticut pet shops purchased dogs from over 600 mostly midwest breeders.
  - 156 unlicensed breeders
  - Of the 450 or so USDA-licensed breeders, 335 had been cited by USDA inspectors for violations of the Animal Welfare Act within the prior 3 years



## Federal Law is Inadequate

- The USDA licenses and inspects commercial dog breeders according to standards set forth by a federal law called the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).
  - The AWA is inadequate to prevent the mistreatment of dogs in the commercial breeding facilities supplying CT pet shops.
  - Thus, a USDA license is not a certification of a breeder's humaneness – only of the breeder's legal right to breed.
- Under the AWA, it is LEGAL for breeders to:
  - fail to provide dogs with veterinary care (9 CFR§ 2.40)
  - keep the indoor temperature no higher than 45 degrees (9 CFR§ 3.2)
  - provide dogs with bedding only if the indoor or outdoor temperature falls below 50 degrees (9 CFR§ 3.2; 9 CFR § 3.4)
  - expose dogs to artificial light alone and provide no natural light (9 CFR § 3.2)
  - confine a dog 24/7 so that she has no more than six inches of space on all sides (9 CFR §3.6)
  - provide dogs with wire flooring only and no solid flooring (9 CFR §3.6)
  - confine dogs in stacked cages (9 CFR §3.6)
  - fail to provide dogs with exercise or any socialization with people or other dogs (9 CFR §3.8)
  - breed dogs repeatedly with little or no recovery time between litters and to kill them when they are "spent" after a few years.



# THIS IS LEGAL...





**Stacked Cages**

**Wire Flooring**

**No access to grass**

**Exposure to the elements**

**No Toys**

**No Socialization with Humans**

**find out more by visiting [nopetstorepuppies.com/buy a-puppy](http://nopetstorepuppies.com/buy-a-puppy)**



# LEGAL, BUT NOT HUMANE.



## ILLEGAL UNDER FEDERAL LAW

Cage walls are scratched, showing grime, and cage has cobwebs and shed dog hair.

## LEGAL UNDER FEDERAL LAW

Small Cage Size  
Feces on Ground  
No Clean Food or Water Visible  
No Socialization with Humans or Other Dogs  
No Toys

find out more by visiting [nopetstorepuppies.com/buy-a-puppy](http://nopetstorepuppies.com/buy-a-puppy)

**ASPCA**

## The ASPCA Link to the AWA

- USDA enforcement of the AWA is poor and cannot be relied upon to identify and penalize non-compliant breeders.
  - In a 2010 audit, the U.S. Office of Inspector General concluded that the USDA's enforcement process was altogether insufficient, and "ineffective against problematic dealers."
- Since the audit's release, violators are still rarely fined or their licenses suspended, with most receiving only warnings after lengthy enforcement proceedings (i.e., almost 4 years, on average).

## Poor USDA Enforcement

- The USDA employs only approximately 120 inspectors to inspect all USDA-licensed and regulated breeders, dealers, transporters, exhibitors, and research institutions.
- There are currently almost 2000 licensed breeders alone, a number that will jump possibly by the thousands (i.e., to as many as 4600 licensed breeders) due to the new USDA rule requiring licensure and inspection of breeders selling online.



## Untreated Illness and Injury

Sharon Hubbard, USDA license #48A1519 (Kansas)  
*Untreated neck wound*



Victor Graber, USDA license #33A0515 (Illinois)  
*Untreated eye injury*



Linda Thorp, USDA license #42A1140 (Iowa)  
*Dead schnauzer puppy discovered by USDA*



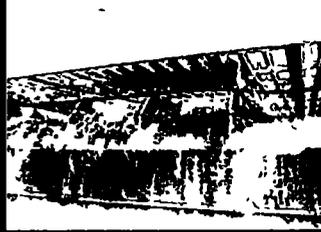
Harvey Burkholder, USDA license #42A1140 (Ohio)  
*Grade 5 periodontal disease*



# Waste Accumulation, Grime, Unavailable Water, and Insect Infestation

Dean Dekkers, USDA license #42A1251 (Iowa)

*Waste accumulation under cages*



Brad Grotewold, USDA license #42A0119 (Iowa) – has sold to broker Hunte Corp.

*Waste accumulation/grime*



Menno & Toby Bornreger, USDA license #42A1438 (Iowa)

*Waste accumulation and fly infestation*



Janelle Yates, USDA license #43A5324 (Missouri)

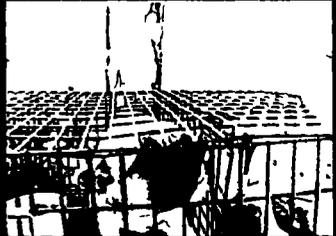
*Puppies standing in food bowl after walking through waste*



# Inadequate Shelter/Water

John Schmucker, USDA license #32B0210J (Indiana)

*Puppies in too small cages, unable to stand*



Janelle Yates, USDA license #43A5324 (Missouri)

*Heat index 113.5 degrees (98.9 degrees real temp); 2 Dachshunds with no water*



Henry Wagler, USDA license # 32A0244 (Indiana)

*Green (undrinkable) water*



**The overwhelming majority of Connecticut families do not obtain their dogs from the 16 pet shops that still sell puppies.**

- To support a "consumer demand" claim, pet industry representatives argued to the Task Force that 7,000 puppies were sold by Connecticut pet shops in 2012. But there are approximately 500,000 dog-owning households in Connecticut (*AVMA U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook, 2012*), so pet shops fill a fraction of the demand.
- Several rescue organizations testified before the Task Force regarding the abundance of rescued puppies available to Connecticut adopters.
- Over 100 Connecticut pet shops do not sell dogs and thrive, including small local businesses.

**The Cost**

- In FY 2012, Connecticut's Animal Population Control Program (APCP) spent \$733,199 to reduce overpopulation, while 2,700 dogs and cats were euthanized in Connecticut's municipal shelters.
- According to peer-reviewed studies, the puppy mill trade produces adult breeding dogs and puppies (who end up in Connecticut) with severe, extensive, and long-term harm to their behavioral and psychological well-being.



Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Debora M. Bresch, Esq.

Debora M. Bresch, Esq.

Breakstone SB445

Enid Breakstone  
Founder & Executive Director  
The Queenie Foundation, Inc.  
164 Wetherell St.  
Manchester, CT 06040  
860 649 9997  
[queeniefound@hotmail.com](mailto:queeniefound@hotmail.com)

As a state, we are in the unique position to lead the nation in compassion toward companion dogs and cats. We can stop the sale of dogs from puppy mills or commercial breeders. We have already passed legislation that requires genetically modified food to be labeled and we are on the precipice of passing legislation that would increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 and hour.

The next thing to do is to ban the sale of puppy mill dogs from commercial breeders. To be clear, a puppy mill is a large-scale commercial breeding operation where profits are given a higher priority than the well-being of the dogs.

As a rescuer, I have first-hand experience of dogs from puppy mills. We had one foster dog who never stopped spinning in circles. No matter how much our behaviorist worked with her, she could not be trained to be still. Eventually, we euthanized her because that was the kindest action to take.

We had other dogs come into our foster system whose fur was so badly matted that all we could do is shave them down to the skin over their entire body. Their nails were so long they were curling over into their pads. These are examples of how dogs are treated at commercial breeding operations.

The Animal Welfare Act provides scant protection for dogs and puppies born and living in puppy mills. For example, breeders are not required to provide veterinary care, exercise or socialization, solid flooring in their cages or down time between litters. This is particularly heinous

**Enid Breakstone  
Founder & Executive Director  
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because after several years, breeding dogs are killed when they are "spent."

We are asking that pet stores be prohibited from selling dogs from commercial breeders.

We can show the nation that Connecticut knows compassion and good sense. We've already shown that we care about human health by requiring genetically modified food be labeled and that people earn a living wage. Let's show that we care about man's and woman's best friend, too, because it's the right thing to do.

Basile  
445Testimony Concerning SB 445

Jo-Anne Basile, March 17, 20014

Before the Connecticut General Assembly, Committee on the Environment

Senator Meyer, Representative Linda Gentile and Members of the Environment Committee, my name is Jo-Anne Basile and I am a resident of Guilford Connecticut. I am here today to speak on SB 445, An Act Concerning Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops. Although I am speaking on my own behalf I am also a proud member of Connecticut Votes for Animals, ASPCA and the HSUS and support their position on this bill.

There are three items I want to address:

First as a resident of Guilford I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Senator Edward Meyer whose interest and support in the humane treatment of animals does not go without notice. Since the first time Senator Meyer met with constituents and animal advocates over a year ago he has been open to learning about and finding a solution to the puppy mill issue for residents of Connecticut. It is reaffirming to be represented by an elected official who takes a stance on the right way of governing even if it's not the most popular or expedient.

Second, I am a former owner of a pet supply shop that specialized in dog and cat food, supplies, toys and links to pet resources. At no time would I ever consider selling live animals. I did however partner with multiple rescues in hosting successful adoption events at my store several times a year. The adoption events were always gratifying and they proved good for business too; there was always press coverage and the store became known for its compassionate approach to animals. Because my store was located in a town adjacent to a newly opened store selling puppies from commercial breeding facilities, I saw first-hand some of the problems experienced by owners who bought their dogs there. You've already heard about the unique health issues related to puppy mill puppies and they were more than evident in our area. But one constant refrain heard when owners learned about the breeding conditions of the puppy they bought -- was a vow never to buy from a puppy store again. These owners loved their dog without question but knowing what they now knew they didn't want to perpetuate the cruel conditions found in commercial breeding facilities; they knew the only way to stop it was not to buy from those stores ever again.

Lastly, Connecticut has the opportunity to be a leader and take a stance on the inhumane treatment of breeding dogs. If SB 445 is enacted with the recommended changes, Connecticut

will be the first state to say No to puppy mills at the state border. Don't let the puppy stores fool you into thinking this issue is about jobs in the state because it's not. It is about easy profit at the expense of living creatures while keeping a blind eye to cruel breeding practices. Be assured Connecticut's pet stores have options and the fact that there are only 16 pet shops, representing only 10% of the towns in Connecticut - suggests there is not nearly the demand the pet industry claims. There are 100 stores in the state that thrive on a successful business model that includes the ethical principles of adoption and rescue. Why do you think stores like Petco, PetSmart, Value Pet don't sell companion animals? Trust me it's not because they don't want to make a profit. These stores chose not to make a business out of selling dogs and cats; instead they made a business out of selling good will. They figured it out and I trust Connecticut's 16 stores can do the same.

For the record, I urge the committee to include language in SB 445 that would call for an immediate ban on the sale of commercially bred dogs in new pet shops, and a phase out of their sale in the 16 pet shops that now sell them. In 2012, Connecticut's Animal Population Control Program (APCP) spent almost \$735,000 to reduce the dog and cat overpopulation problem. Still, 2,700 dogs and cats were euthanized in Connecticut's municipal shelters.

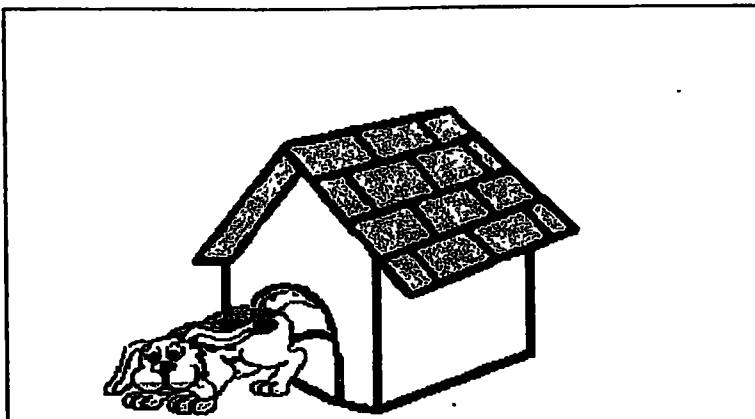
I am a Connecticut native that returned to the state after being away for 30 years. And I will tell you that living in this state is not easy; taxes are high and the weather is awful but I stay because Connecticut is one of the few states that does the right thing on so many issues that matter to me.

I urge the Committee to say no to puppy mills and ensure that Connecticut is not party to the abhorrent treatment of animals condoned in states like Missouri, Arkansas, and Kansas. Connecticut is better than that and this Committee has the power to ensure it stays that way.

Thank you.

Carty 445

The Dog House I, Inc.  
 120-D Hale Rd  
 Manchester, CT 06040  
 Ph (860) 648-1514  
 Fax (860) 648-1519



March 17, 2014

Dear Environment Committee Member: Re: Bill 445

***For the past fourteen years my son Chris and I have owned and operated The Dog House located in Manchester Connecticut. We have cared for and found homes for over twelve thousand puppies and over the last five years six hundred rescue dogs.***

***Your committee might have received some proposals that would require all CT Pet Stores to sell dogs sourced only from rescues or shelters. We have rescued dogs abandoned at our doorstep, people call us requesting that we take their dog because they can not afford them or they are moving and can no longer care for them. We also began working with another rescue organization since last October. We have rescued over 100 dogs with the help of this organization. The majority of these dogs were from shelters.***

***In our experience puppies obtained from breeders have less health issues than our rescue dogs. There are number of reasons:***

- ***Dog breeders are highly experienced in caring for puppies***
- ***Dog breeders follow proper protocols with routine vaccinations and de-worming at the appropriate ages prior to their arrival at a pet shop***
- ***Puppies from breeders receive high quality, proper nourishment***
- ***Most rescue dogs have unknown medical histories***
- ***Puppies from breeders have limited to no exposure to other dogs. Rescue dogs have typically been exposed to other dogs therefore increasing the risk for exposure to diseases***
- ***Since many rescue dogs have a rough beginning they tend to have more psychological/ behavior issues***

The Dog House I, Inc.  
120-D Hale Rd  
Manchester, CT 06040  
Ph (860) 648-1514  
Fax (860) 648-1519

*We eventually find a good home for each and every one of our rescue dogs, however in most cases it takes an average two to six months and in the case of Vinny, a five year old terrier mix one and one half years. The majority of customers who come to our store looking for a rescue dog are searching for a younger dog. They are generally not interested in an older mixed breed rescue dog.*

**If we had to rely on only rescue dogs as a source of revenue we would go out of business.**

*I will leave you with the following:*

- *We are very passionate about the proper care and treatment of all our puppies and dogs*
- *We are committed to a goal of 100% customer satisfaction*
- *Connecticut consumers want the freedom of choice-some prefer a rescue dog and others a specific pure bred puppy*
- *We have Zero tolerance for any bad breeders. We will always strive to obtain our puppies and rescue dogs from breeders and organizations that care as much about the health and well being of their dogs as we do.*

*I thank you for your time and Happy St. Patty's Day!*

*Respectively submitted,*

*Richard J. Carty*  
Richard J. Carty

03/17/2014 10:17 FAX

→ DOG HOUSE

4001

Lee 445

The Dog House  
Reference: Bill 445  
Testimonial from Hollie Lee  
March 17, 2014

Hello and thank you for listening to my testimony. My name is Hollie Lee and I am an employee at The Dog House. I have been employed there for a year and I can honestly say that I love my job. As a dog lover I have become responsible for many different jobs at The Dog House. I help take care of our puppies and assist our veterinarian every week with her health exams. I also take care of our customer's dogs who attend our doggie daycare and boarding facility. The Dog House also has a rescue and adoption program which I have become highly involved in. We get rescue dogs both locally and from shelters in Tennessee.

We are all dog lovers at The Dog House and we work very hard in making sure all of our dogs receive the best possible care. We do our best to match up the right dog with each customer. Many of our customers are looking for a purebred puppy. We usually have a variety of different breeds for people to choose from. Other customers come in looking to rescue one of our adoption dogs. These dogs are mostly mix breeds and range from 2 months to 7 years old.

I personally have a purebred Boxer named "Champ" from The Dog House. My family and I got Champ as a puppy. Champ is 8 months old now is a wonderful dog. My 3 children adore him and he has brought so much happiness to our family.

Again, I and the rest of my co-workers are all dog lovers at The Dog House. We enjoy taking care of all the dogs there. And whether they're a purebred puppy or a rescue dog it is always very rewarding watching them go home with their new families.

Thank you again for your time.



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## SB 445 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

My name is Peach Reid, and I am the CEO of Fish Mart, the Northeast's largest wholesale distributor of aquatics and pets. I am very familiar with CT pet store owners, whom I have worked with for decades. These men and women – your constituents – are committed entrepreneurs, tireless workers and compassionate pet owners, not heartless capitalists who cut corners at every opportunity. I sit before you today as a member of PIJAC's Board of Directors.

We have a responsibility to the animals themselves, not to mention our customers. And it should be apparent that pet stores have a significant financial incentive to adhere to the highest standards of care and sourcing; they are dependent on their reputation and positive word of mouth to stay in business.

Unfortunately, there are those who oppose the very existence of commercial breeders in the United States, and they believe that putting Connecticut pet stores that sell dogs and cats out of business is the best way to hurt those out-of-state breeders. This agenda was apparent throughout the hearings held by the Task Force, and you will continue to hear it in today's testimony.

It was recommended by the Task Force that any new pet store that opens within the state be required to source its animals exclusively from shelters, rescues and local breeders. This would be bad for new stores, old stores, and the state alike.

- Fresh & Salt Water Tropicals
- African Cichlids
- Aquatic Specialties
- Reptiles & Amphibians
- Imported & Domestic Goldfish
- Plants
- Live & Frozen Foods
- Small Animals
- Birds



Any attempt to limit pet stores to sourcing their animals from shelters, rescues and local breeders would actually REMOVE the existing protections offered by the USDA certification of sources who supply them; this would actually DECREASE the transparency and protection currently enjoyed by consumers and would also call into question the applicability of the state's existing warranty law (which does not apply to shelters or rescues). Existing stores would be forced to change or close, as they could no longer sell or transfer existing licenses without doing so. This would create two types of pet retailers, subject to two different enforcement regimes, at a time when the state Division of Animal Control has already indicated that it lacks the resources to effectively enforce everything with which it is already tasked.

Additionally, the Task Force recommended – and SB 445 includes – a provision that prohibits the use of breeders who have been cited for three or more indirect Non-Compliance Issues by the USDA in the previous two years that affect the health and well-being of animals. We submit that refining the language in the bill to make this specifically applicable to indirect NCIs under sections 2.40 and 2.131 of the Animal Welfare Act would accomplish this.

Finally, I would ask that you reconsider the extent of the expansion of the state's existing pet warranty law, which was just strengthened less than two years ago. Though cases are rare, occasionally animals are sold with contracted illnesses or hereditary conditions that were not readily apparent. More than 20 states have warranty laws in existence and the vast majority have arrived at a *de facto* standard of reimbursement for veterinary costs up to the purchase price of the dog or cat. I would strongly encourage you to raise Connecticut's existing reimbursement rate to bring it in line with this national standard, but not to exceed it.

We at PIJAC appreciate your efforts to address the humane treatment of animals we bring into the lives of Connecticut's families. But we remain concerned about attempts to pass legislation that does nothing to address its intended target – out-of-state breeders who give the entire pet industry a bad name – while putting small, locally-owned stores out of business and forcing hundreds of pet store employees across the state out of work. Connecticut can be a leader in the push to improve conditions for all animals across the country, but you do not need to do so at the expense of your own constituents.

Thank you for your time.

**Testimony of Monty Kaufman, Puppies of Westport  
To The Environment Committee on SB 445**

**I'm here on behalf of your constituents-  
Over 30,000 Connecticut families and Individuals  
who chose to purchase a puppy from a store since  
2010.**

**Every pin on this map represents five purchasers.**

**Numbers in each of your districts range from  
25 in Representative Ryan's to 854 in Senator  
Chapin's.**

**Over 100,000 citizens with a puppy that's part of  
their family-**

**A number far greater than the membership of all  
animal welfare groups combined.**

**It means employment, taxes, and real estate. But  
more importantly, it's a choice citizens made to get  
their best friend from the source they choose-  
a right no legislative body should even think of  
taking away.**

**If we were doing a fraction of what we're accused,  
the market would shut us down.**

**But CT stores average over ten years in business.**

---

With under 20 complaints on pet store puppies to the State from 2010 to 13.

Less than six per year statewide.

But with all the noise, rhetoric, billboards, posters, letters, web sites and false accusations, CT stores sold more puppies in 2013 than prior years.

There are bad breeders that need to change or close.

And the same is true of many rescues, shelters, and pounds.

But the activists have an agenda- to restrict free citizens to a source they approve without regard to the consumer's wishes-  
But they need your help to do it.

So they have to make things look worse than they are. And they often do.

Primary evidence at the Task Force was a study the activists repeatedly referenced.

But that study is totally flawed.

Take Puppies of Westport:

Of 72 flawed breeders they listed for 2012-  
we did not get a single puppy from 41 of them!

Statewide, their breeder numbers are inflated, they claim 162 unlicensed breeders when all were legal and included photos from breeders with clean inspections or from prior years.

They treat Direct and Indirect violations equally and breeders with any violation the same as the most guilty.

They falsely claimed that 46% of our 2012 breeders were horrible violators when we did not acquire a single puppy from a breeder with a direct violation at time of purchase in 2012.

The activists are seeking a CT solution for which there is hardly a CT problem and it is my strong hope that the members of this Committee will understand what is really going on here and act accordingly.

I welcome any questions.

**Puppies Sold By Connecticut Puppy Stores  
To Cities & Towns Represented By Members  
Of The Environment Committee 2010-Present**

<b>District</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Puppies</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Puppies</b>
21	Demicco	62	97	Megna	453
34	Ziobron	187	99	Albis	254
35	Vicino	196	104	Gentile	204
36	Miller	72	106	Bolinsky	214
40	Moukawsher	63	117	Davis	829
42	Bowles	12	121	Backer	362
43	Urban	24	122	Miller	950
47	Sear	52	125	O'Dea	533
53	Belsito	40	127	Hennessy	687
63	Case	139	135	Shaban	385
64	Willis	174	139	Ryan	25
66	Miner	117	S12	Meyer	721
67	Buck-Taylor	318	S18	Maynard	101
80	Sampson	190	S30	Chapin	854
85	Mushinsky	704		<b>Total Committee</b>	<b>8922</b>

## PUPPIES SOLD TO CONNECTICUT CITIES &amp; TOWNS 2010-PRESENT\*

amston	15	east windsor	7	new canaan	264	south kent	8
andover	24	easton	88	new fairfield	198	south meriden	16
ansonias	116	ellington	36	new hartford	9	south windsor	36
ashford	9	enfield	72	new haven	453	southbury	177
avon	28	essex	15	new london	21	southington	352
baltic	5	fairfield	746	new milford	318	southport	87
bantam	11	farmington	62	new preston	16	stafford	18
barkhamstead	4	gales ferry	11	newington	169	stafford springs	9
beacon falls	36	gaylordsville	23	newtown	214	stamford	759
berlin	143	georgetown	5	niantic	13	sterling	3
bethany	24	glastonbury	83	norfolk	4	stonington	22
bethel	256	goshen	13	north branford	113	stormville	4
bethlehem	23	granby	11	north haven	282	storrs	2
bloomfield	32	greenwich	326	north stonington	2	stratford	362
bolton	9	griswold	7	northford	69	suffield	16
bozrah	2	groton	57	norwalk	1057	terryville	68
branford	252	gullford	134	norwich	23	thomaston	53
bridgeport	687	haddam	24	oakdale	6	tolland	31
bridgewater	63	hamden	365	oakville	54	torrington	123
bristol	854	hartford	86	old greenwich	41	trumbull	311
broadbrook	16	harwinton	17	old lyme	44	uncasville	9
brookfield	329	hebron	6	old saybrook	24	unionville	33
burlington	78	higganum	97	orange	117	vernon	61
byram	2	huntington	5	oxford	91	wallingford	704
canaan	4	kensington	243	plainville	164	warren	8
canterbury	14	kent	28	plantsville	153	washington	9
canton	24	killington	46	plymouth	9	washington depot	2
cheshire	552	lakeville	6	pomfret	4	waterbury	548
chester	28	lebanon	8	portland	83	waterford	29
clinton	104	ledyard	6	preston	4	watertown	59
cobalt	1	lisbon	4	prospect	59	west hartford	114
colchester	114	litchfield	16	quaker hill	6	west haven	368
collinsville	2	lyme	16	redding	48	west simsbury	6
columbia	15	madison	98	ridgefield	314	westbrook	46
coscob	57	manchester	147	riverside	51	westfield	3
coventry	21	mansfield corner	6	rockfall	14	weston	249
cromwell	121	marion	13	rockville	4	westport	684
danbury	764	marlborough	22	rocky hill	125	wetherly	3
danielson	2	meriden	1195	rowayton	39	wethersfield	77
danville	9	middlebury	48	roxbury	19	willimantic	23
darien	244	middlefield	18	salisbury	4	wilton	269
dayville	3	middletown	386	salisbury	2	winchester	3
deep river	5	milford	342	sandy hook	114	windham	26
derby	88	milldale	7	scotland	3	windsor	52
durham	78	monroe	194	seymour	88	windsor locks	27
east berlin	12	moodus	17	sharon	6	winstead	17
east granby	9	moosup	6	shelton	278	wolcott	168
east haddam	19	morris	4	sherman	44	woodbridge	72
east hampton	65	mystic	8	simsbury	34	woodbury	66
east hartford	79	naugatuck	292	somers	17	woodstock	4
east haven	254	new britain	493			yalesville	13

\* Total on page is 23,170 out of over 33,000 sold (no purchaser data available on balance)

**Puppies Sold At CT Puppy Stores 2010- Present\***

Store	City	Total
Debbies Pet Land	Kensington	67
Fin and Feather	Groton	576
Guppies to Puppies	Old Saybrook	404
Home Raised	Berlin	778
Magic Pet Shop	Wethersfield	9
Pet Center	Torrington	324
Pet Zone	Waterbury	256
Precious Pupz	East Haven	116
Puppy Center	West Hartford	1156
Puppy Patch	Watertown	1228
Reain of Pets	Southington	138
Triple Oaks	Danville	1195
True Breeders	Wilton	169
Under One Woof	New Milford	176
Safari Stans	New Haven	39
The Pet Company	Milford	543
The Pet Company	Danbury	693
		<b>7867</b>

**\*Stores for which there was no purchaser data**

**Out of State Sales**

New York	1460
Massachusetts	378
Rhode Island	240
Other	150

<b>Total # of Puppies Sold</b>	<b>33,255</b>
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## Breeders Used By CT Pet Stores In 2012

**Report compiled 13/4/2013**

**Submitted as testimony by Karen Rasmussen, Wilton, CT**

**“For each pet store, this report provides a bulleted summary containing the total number of breeders used in 2012, the number of these breeders with USDA violations during the period 2010- 2012 and the number of breeders that were not found in the USDA’s database. The breeders with USDA violation are then listed alphabetically, and described in fuller detail...”**

### **PUPPIES OF WESTPORT**

**Used 74 Total Breeders**

**33 Of These Had USDA Violations**

**4 Unlicensed/ Unknown**

**Report Posted on Internet Stated 46% of Store’s breeders violated the Animal Welfare Act.**

**BREEDERS USED BY PUPPIES OF WESTPORT IN 2012  
AS COMPILED BY KAREN RASMUSSEN AND PRESENTED TO TASK FORCE**

72 Breeders Listed

41 Not actually used in 2012

<del>Bailey, Carroll</del>	<del>Culler, Renea</del>	<del>Keezer, Ruth</del>	<del>Spear, Joyce</del>
<del>Baker, Linda</del>	<del>Doherty, Marie</del>	<del>Kochs, Angela</del>	<del>Straight, Fran &amp; Jim</del>
<del>Benson, Denise</del>	<del>Feldman, Charles</del>	<del>Landers, Mark</del>	<del>Stutzman, Floyd</del>
<del>Boyd, Benita</del>	<del>Fetters, Betty</del>	<del>Landsdown, Clifford</del>	<del>Swartzentruber, Paul &amp; Josie</del>
<del>Boyd, Marvin &amp; Bonnie</del>	<del>Fields, Angela</del>	<del>Loe, Debbir</del>	<del>Swearingen, Diane</del>
<del>Brasher, Linda</del>	<del>Flores-Kennel</del>	<del>Madison, Shonda</del>	<del>Taylor, Theresa</del>
<del>Brecheisen, Dorothy</del>	<del>Fox, Beverly</del>	<del>McGowan, Maggie</del>	<del>Thomas, Lorilee</del>
<del>Breedlove, Ailsa</del>	<del>Fox, Gody</del>	<del>Mid-America</del>	<del>Thorp, Linda</del>
<del>Brown, Donna</del>	<del>Gear, Rhonda</del>	<del>Middleton, Brittny</del>	<del>Turner, Ken &amp; Debbie</del>
<del>Brown, Kaitly</del>	<del>Gorden, Chris</del>	<del>Mings, Betty</del>	<del>Wagler, Owen</del>
<del>Bundy, Jerry &amp; Marlene</del>	<del>Graber, Marvitt</del>	<del>Novak, Carol</del>	<del>Warren, Deb</del>
<del>Campbell, Tommy &amp; Theresa</del>	<del>Green, Leah</del>	<del>Quinn, Ann</del>	<del>Watts, Gerald</del>
<del>Cannon, Debra</del>	<del>Hart, Delinda</del>	<del>Reynolds, Pam</del>	<del>Weaver, Cindy</del>
<del>Cox, Lou</del>	<del>Henderson, Tracy</del>	<del>Riley, Mark</del>	<del>Willis, Margaret</del>
<del>Cozart, Terry</del>	<del>Hillyard, Christina</del>	<del>Rottinghaus, Kelly</del>	<del>Woodley, Clark &amp; Amy</del>
<del>Crane, Linda</del>	<del>Horn, Kent</del>	<del>Schmecker, John</del>	<del>Wortman, Doug</del>
<del>Craddeek, Bill Lou</del>	<del>Houck, Michelle</del>	<del>Sherill, Kay</del>	<del>Zuspan, Ruth</del>
<del>Cressel, Neat</del>	<del>Hurliman, Dwayne</del>	<del>Slagley, Rhonda</del>	<del>Zuspan, Sherrie</del>

PUPPIES OF WESTPORT PUPPIES 2012		INSP 1		INSP 2		INSP 3		INSP 4		INSP 5		NOTES		
USDA #	BREEDER/BROKER	DATE	I	R	DATE	I	R	DATE	I	R	DATE	I	R	NOTES
43-A-2950	Allen, Deborah & Nelson	Apr-11	0	0	Apr-12	0	0	Jun-13	0	0				
43-A-4793	Arnatt, Brenda	Aug-11	0	0	Aug-12	0	0	Jan-14	0	0				
43-B-3609	Bailey, Carroll	Nov-12	1	0	Dec-12	1	2	Jan-13	0	0	Jun-13	0	0	
43-B-3515	Blake, John & Sandra	Sep-11	0	0	Feb-13	0	0							
43-A-4085	Bolin, Tina	Apr-11	0	0	May-12	0	0	May-13	0	0				
46-A-0394	Boyd, Nancy & Brenda	Mar-12	0	6	Sep-13	2	6	Sep-13	0	1				cancelled license 2013
71-A-0763	Bresler, Linda	May-11	0	0	May-12	0	0	Mar-13	0	0				
48-A-1755	Brecheisen, Dorothy	Nov-12	0	6	Mar-13	0		Nov-13	1	5	4			
43-A-3357	Brown, Donna	Oct-11	0	0	Mar-13	0	2	Mar-13	0	0				
43-A-4893	Bundy, Jerry & Marlene	Jul-12	0	0	Jun-13	0	0							
43-A-5503	Burrow, Myra	Jul-11	0	2	Jun-12	0	0	Apr-13	0	0	Dec-13	0	0	
43-A-5273	Cahn, Joyce	Feb-12	0	0	Oct-12	0	0	Jun-13	0	0	Jan-14	0	0	
42-B-0253	Campbell, Tommy	Mar-11	0	0	Mar-11	0	2							cancelled license 2013
48-B-0846	Clausen, Cindy	Mar-11	0	0	Jan-12	0	0	Jan-13	0	0				
43-A-4860	Cook, Shirley	Aug-11	0	0	Jul-12	0	0							
48-A-2137	Cox, Robin & Rebecca	Oct-11	0	13	Dec-11	0	0	Aug-12	0	2	May-13	0	1	
43-B-3600	Cozart, Terry	Feb-12	0	0	Sep-12	0	0	Aug-13	0	0				
43-B-3476	Crewse, Connie	Mar-12	0	0	Apr-13	0	0							
43-A-3792	Curtis, Sherry	Aug-11	0	0	Jul-12	0	0							
43-A-3800	Dalley, LaDonna	Nov-12	0	0	Oct-13	0	0							
48-A-2019	Dillow, Karen & Joshua	Aug-11	0	0	Aug-12	0	0	Apr-13	0	0				
48-B-0321	Doherty, Marie	Mar-11	0	4	Nov-11	0	0	Dec-12	0	0	Dec-13	0	0	
48-A-2118	Duryea, Vickie	Jan-11	0	0	Oct-12	0	0	Nov-13	X	X				
43-A-5666	Dykes, Larry- Rte	Mar-11	0	0	May-12	0	0	Jun-13	0	0				
43-B-3484	Fatters, Betty	Jun-11	0	0	Jul-12	0	2	Sep-13	0	0				
43-A-5553	Fields, Angela	Jun-11	0	1	Aug-12	0	0	Dec-13	0	0				
73-A-2556	Flanders, David & Becky	Jan-12	0	0	Jul-13	0	0							
43-A-5332	Fox, Teresa L.	Mar-12	0	0	Apr-13	0	0							
43-A-5071	Goring, Cheryl	Feb-12	0	0	Jun-13									
43-A-2599	Green, Leah & Floy	Apr-11	0	2	Jun-12	0	0							
73-A-1408	Halpain, Robert & Starmye	Apr-12	0	0	Jul-13	0	3	Jan-14	0	0				
43-A-4783	Hart, Dalinda	Jul-11	0	1	Jul-12	0	0	Jun-13	0	1	Jul-13	0	2	
43-A-0846	Horn, Ellen & Kent	Mar-11	0	1	Oct-12	0	0	Aug-13	0	1				
71-A-0806	Horton, Freda & Jack	Jun-11	0	0	Jun-12	0	0	May-13	0	0				
48-A-1959	Houck, Michelle	Mar-11	0	1	Feb-12	0	0	Mar-13	0	1				
43-B-3601	Hough, Brenda & Tina	Sep-11	0	0	Jul-12	0	0	Apr-13	0	0	Jan-14	0	0	
43-A-5594	Howlett, Debbie	Sep-11	0	0	Aug-12	0	0	May-13	0	1	Dec-13	0	0	



# USDA Inspection Reports for All Breeders listed in Karen Rasmussen report submitted to Task Force\*

\*Direct (D), Indirect (I) and Repeat (R) Violation Numbers are provided for each inspection

USDA #	BREEDER/BROKER	CITY	ST	Insp. 1		Insp. 2		Insp. 3		Insp. 4		Insp. 5		No Access	
				D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R	DATE	DATE
43-A-5531	Adkins, Don & Kathleen		TX												
42-A-0207	Anderson, Linda														
46-A-0406	Asmussen, Pamela & Rodney	Arlington	SD	Jun-11	0	1	0	Dec-11	0	0	0	May-12	0	16	0
43-A-5573	Bagley, Gary	Caulfield	MO												
43-B-3609	Bailey, Carroll	Goodman	MO	Nov-12	1	0	0	Dec-12	1	2	0	Jan-13	0	0	0
43-A-3415	Baker, Linda & Kenneth	Summersville	MO	Jan-12	0	0	0	Jun-13	0	1	0				
43-A-4762	Baldwin, Pamela	Edgar Springs	MO	May-12	0	0	0	Aug-12	1	1	1	Sep-12	0	0	0
71-A-0923	Barker, Edward & Wanda	Maynard	AR	Jun-13	1	0	0	Aug-13	1	1	1	Sep-13	1	3	2
63-B-0144	Bauman, Leslie	Montary	TN	Mar-11	0	3	0	Jan-12	0	1	0	Jan-13	0	0	0
47-A-0237	Benson, Denise	Scotta	NE	May-11	0	1	0	Dec-12	0	3	0				
73-A-1326	Bentley, Mickey, Elva & Ty	Rosston	OK	Apr-11	0	0	0	Apr-12	0	1	0	Apr-13	0	1	0
43-A-3923	Barhorst, Dan	Freaburg	MO	Jun-11	0	5	1	Oct-11	0	3	1	Feb-12	0	0	0
48-A-0907	Barnsten, Banta & Carleen	Lathrpe	KS	Jul-11	0	4	1	Mar-12	0	1	0	Jan-13	0	1	0
42-A-0408	Beukelman, Allen	Stoux Center	IA	Aug-11	0	2	1	Mar-12	0	3	2	Aug-12	0	3	2
73-A-0531	Birchfield, Beatrice	Atoka	OK	Oct-11	0	0	0	Jan-12	0	0	0	Mar-13	0	4	0
48-A-1196	Bless, John & Becky	Cherryvale	KS												
43-A-1116	Blomberg, Bill & Kathie	Versailles	MO	May-13	0	4	0								
48-A-1592	Bob, Yvette & Larry	Dipe	KS	Sep-11	1	8	0	Dec-11	1	2	2	Mar-12	0	1	1
42-A-1438	Bontzger, Menna & Toby	Riceville	IA												
73-A-2637	Bonham, Brett	Cordell	OK	Apr-11	0	0	0	Aug-12	0	1	0				
43-A-4436	Bonham, Harry & Wanda	Portersville	MO	Jun-11	0	3	0	May-12	0	1	1	Jun-12	0	0	0
71-A-1049	Boyd, Bernita	Peal	AR	Aug-11	0	0	0	Dec-12	0	0	0	Nov-13	0	1	0
43-A-4622	Boyd, Bonnie B. & Marvin	Phillipsburg	MO	May-11	0	2	0	Jul-12	0	0	0	Nov-13	0	0	0
46-A-0394	Boyd, Nancy & Brenda	Hurley	SD	Mar-12	0	6	0	Sep-13	2	6	4	Sep-13	0	1	1
71-A-0763	Brasher, Linda	Hevema	AR	May-11	0	0	0	May-12	0	0	0	Mar-13	0	0	0
73-A-2416	Broy, Summer	Broken Bow	OK	Mar-12	0	4	0	Apr-13	0	2	0				
48-A-1755	Brechtstein, Dorothy	Lyndon	KS	Nov-12	0	6	3	Mar-13	0						
43-A-4023	Breadlove, Alisa	Wynessville	MO	Sep-11	0	0	0	Jul-12	0	0	0	Nov-13	0	0	0
46-A-0271	Brenna, Tina	Pulvama	SD	Apr-11	0	3	0	May-12	0	1	0	Aug-13	0	0	0
63-A-0177	Bridges, Mike & Barbara	Enville	TN	Jan-12	0	1	0	Jun-13	0	2	0				
23-A-0381	Britez, Josh	Newville	PA	Dec-11	0	1	0	Mar-13	0	1	0				
43-A-4048	Brooks, Betty	Danphan	MO												
47-B-0091	Brush, Douglas & Mary	Liberty	KS	Jun-11	0	3	0	Aug-12	0	1	0	Apr-13	0	3	0
71-A-0823	Brown, Charles Ray	Hevema	AR												
43-A-3357	Brown, Duina	Ave	MO	Oct-11	0	0	0	Mar-13	0	2	0	Mar-13	0	0	0
43-A-4939	Brown, Kathy	Novinger	MO	May-11	0	1	0	Aug-11	0	3	0	Mar-12	0	1	0
43-A-5554	Brown, Sharon	Galena	MO	Jun-13	0	2	1	Aug-13	0	1	0				

















Winslow  
445

### Environmental Committee Testimony

My name is Brian Winslow, Director of Operations and Animal Welfare with Petland, and I would like to address the idea that eliminating puppy sales in an existing store is as easy as switching puppies for dog food, toys and other products. Having consulted and reviewed financial statements of pet retailers for the past 20 years, changing business models is a very difficult and often impossible transition.

I am here – as I was for each of the Task Force meetings because we have a Connecticut franchisee operating under the name of Safari Stan Pet Center. Within the Petland family, we have some locations that sell puppies and others that do not. While both are models that CAN succeed, there are fundamental differences between the two models and it is not as easy as removing puppies and replacing them with dog food, dog toys and other supplies.

One of the most obvious and costly differences between stores that sell puppies stores that don't is their physical layout. Tens of thousands of dollars are invested into not only the unique pet fixtures and equipment (in our case veterinarian grade tables, sinks, walls, cabinets etc) but additional tens of thousands are invested into the necessary upgraded plumbing, electrical, and HVAC requirements. All of the fixtures and equipment would need to be removed, the space remodeled and replaced with additional merchandise fixtures. The total cost of throwing away fixtures and buying new would be enormous.

By selling puppies, an independent, local pet store distinguishes itself from big box competitors and establishes a loyal customer base. I know many of the stores in Connecticut have spent years and years developing loyal customers. This is essential to their survival in the suburban communities where most of these stores are located. Large national chains purchase their retail products at a much lower price than small, local retailers because of their size and buying power. As a result it is very difficult to compete head to head on just products. In fact, the single largest retailer of pet food and products in the country is Wal-Mart, and I

think we all know the challenges of competing against national chain stores regardless of the category.

A store that sells puppies has different training programs for their employees than non-puppy stores. The two business models also have different marketing and advertising strategies as well. To some degree, changing your business model requires finding new customers. Ask any retailer in any business the challenge of acquiring new customers.

As you consider the future of this legislation I encourage you to keep in mind the impact on store owners and employees. They can't just flip a switch and adopt a new business model; it is a costly and complicated process that would drive many if not most existing Connecticut puppy selling stores out of business.

Thank you for your time.

Katz 445

I am in favor of the ban on importation from puppy mills and a 5 year phase-out of existing stores.

The few stores that sell puppies will tell you that they only do business with reputable breeders. They also admit that most importantly, it's about profit.

The industry will tell you that they support good pet care. But they are supporting breeding farms whose only goal is to produce the greatest quantity at the cheapest price. The neglect of these animals takes place behind distant doors conveniently out of sight and out of mind.

Connecticut stores have an option to forge profitable relationships with the animal shelters that frequently euthanize many of their dogs.

The industry will tell you that they will be in competition with the shelters. But these differences can be worked out to the benefit of the puppy stores.

Every time a solution is proposed, the industry finds an excuse to reject it.

The industry will tell you that they need the extra income from the sale of these animals and that jobs will be lost. You always hear these kinds of excuses. We heard it about minimum wage and Obama-care.

Jobs will not be lost. Pets stores sell a variety of accessories with high profit margins.

The industry will complain that it is important to maintain the revenue stream and they will tell you that they cannot survive without it.

I recall another industry that made the same argument. They said that their family businesses would collapse if the status quo was changed. They argued that their livestock was well taken care of with plenty of food and adequate shelter.

The industry was a farming community of planters and their main crop was cotton and their income came from slavery.

They could never figure out what was so wrong because it was so profitable.

The breeding industry does enslave animals. Customers who buy these dogs only see a wagging tail - not the neglect.

I appeal to your conscience and to the morality of this issue. Please see through the rhetoric that comes from these 16 stores. Think - 16 stores want you to maintain a system that perpetuates this neglect.

The remainder of Connecticut does not.

Bill Katz  
166 Linnmoore St.  
Hartford, CT 06114  
[bkatz321@gmail.com](mailto:bkatz321@gmail.com) 860-956-2844

SB 445

Hello, my name is Togi Kuttamperoor; I am the owner/operator of the Safari Stan's Pet Store, which opened its doors December 30 2013. I strongly believe that a person has the right to choose their perfect pet from a shelter, rescue, OR a pet store. Of these options, of course, pet stores are the most regulated. These regulations ensure that my fellow store owners and I are attending to the health and well-being of the animals we hope to place in loving homes.

I am here today to tell you that the Task Force's caricatures of pet store owners as greedy and uncaring or else ignorant dupes are entirely untrue. Before I could open Safari Stan's, I was required to undergo extensive training regarding the care and welfare of the animals I would carry in the store. Just last month, as part of my continuing education, I was able to visit several breeders, speak with their veterinarians and observe the quality of life at their facilities.

I was struck by the depth of their knowledge regarding dog breeds and their special requirements. I was also pleased to see the way they made sure their dogs were clean, had regular veterinary care, lived in comfortable and sanitary conditions, and received both regular exercise and good nutrition.

All dogs had plenty of space that met the needs of the breed, contact with natural flooring and were socialized with other dogs, toys and exercise rooms. The areas were clean, spacious and well maintained. The dogs were treated as though they were already pets. They were lively, healthy, well adjusted and did not shy away from visitors.

Additionally, nursery buildings were big enough for the mother to be able to move about freely with enclosures that safely contained the puppies.

I have attached some pictures from my visits with the breeders and their dogs that detail the above conditions I observed during my trips to these breeders.

So, with all the attention that the Task Force and activists are giving to pet stores, you would think most dogs and cats come from us, right?

Wrong. According to the ASPCA themselves, somewhere between **two and ten percent** of dogs and cats obtained each year are purchased from pet shops. So how would shutting us down drive bad out-of-state breeders out of business or even help to reduce the number of dogs and cats available in shelters?

While no one supports substandard breeders or "puppy mills", is it really possible that their existence can be attributed to pet store sales if we represent – at most – the source of ten percent of all animals acquired in a given year? Retail pet store bans will never end "puppy mills" for a simple reason – the unlicensed and never inspected breeders don't sell to pet stores.

Breeders who do not sell to pet stores are most often unlicensed and never inspected. With 26% of all puppies being sold directly via the Internet, even HSUS agrees this "internet loophole" is a much larger contributor to the problem "puppy mills."

Pet stores in Connecticut are more regulated than nearly any other industry. Yet, at as few as 2% of sales, pet shop owners are seen as targets by the radical animal rights activists and our elected officials have been fooled by their propaganda.

Finally, my small business creates a positive impact on the Connecticut economy. While small businesses may not generate as much money as large corporations, they are a critical component of and major contributor to the strength of this local economy. They help stimulate economic growth by providing employment opportunities and spending profits on other local goods and services. A ban on the retail sale of pets will cause many pet stores to go out of business and impact many people.

I have also included testimonies from employees, customers ~~and the Mayor of New Haven~~ on their experience at my store.

Thank you for your time.

Togi Kuttamperoor

Owner  
Safari Stan's Pet Center  
142 Amity Road  
New Haven, CT 06515



BREEDER

2011

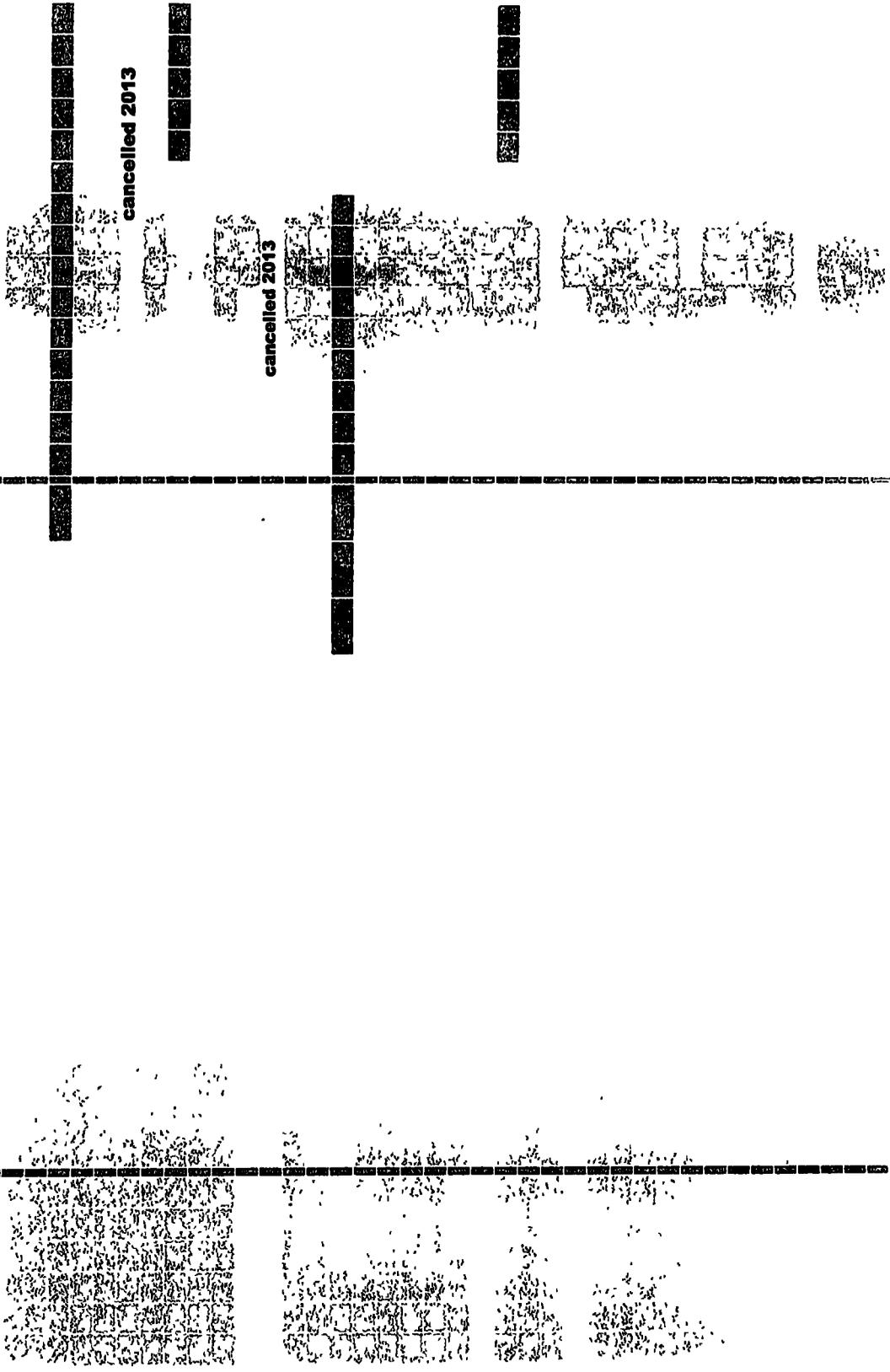
2012

2013

2014

J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M

- Allen, Deborah
- Arnett, Brenda
- Bailey, Carroll
- Blake, John & Sandra
- Bolin, Tina
- Boyd, Nancy & Brenda
- Brasher, Linda
- Brecheisen, Dorothy
- Brown, Donna
- Bundy, Marlene & Jerry
- Burrow, Myra
- Campbell, Tommy
- Clausen, Cindy
- Cook, Shirley
- Cox, Robin & Rebecca
- Cozart, Terry
- Crewse, Connie
- Curtis, Sherry
- Dalley, LaDonna
- Dillow, Karen & Joshua
- Doherty, Marie
- Durvea, Vicky
- Dykes, Larry
- Fetters, Betty
- Fields, Angela
- Goring, Cheryl
- Flanders, David/Becky
- Fox, Teresa L.
- Goring, Cheryl
- Green, Leah
- Halpain, Robert/Starmye
- Hart, Delinda
- Horn, Ellen & Kent
- Horton, Freda
- Houck, Michelle
- Hough, Brenda & Tina
- Howlett, Debbie
- Hubner, Jo, Kate & Roger



# Togi at Dave Millers



Dave Miller and his  
Newfoundlands

**Safari  
Stan's  
Pet Center**

Terry and Howard  
Buening breed  
great Scottish  
Terriers,  
Chihuahuas, and  
Papillions.

JR



Terry



Togi

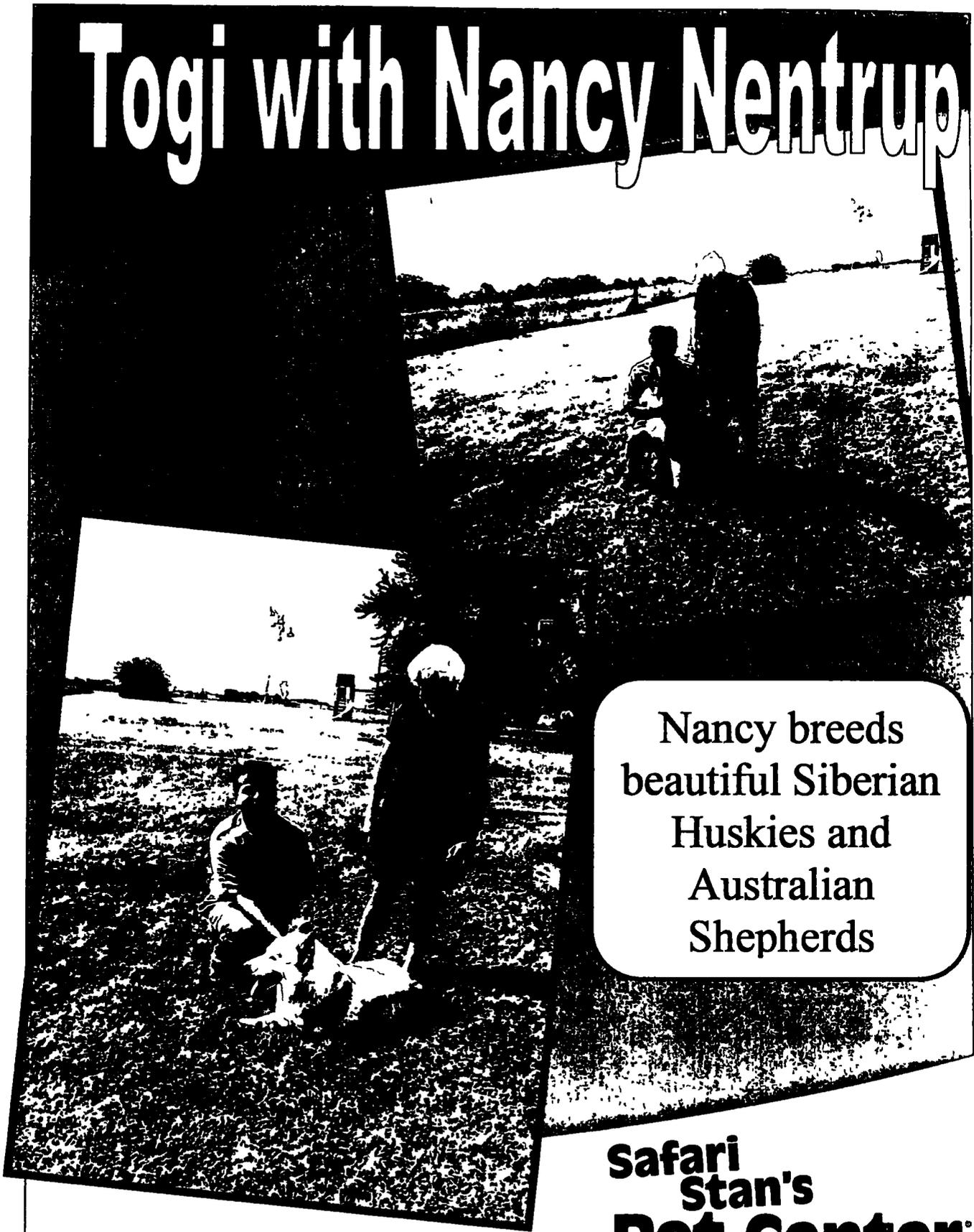


Togi



**Safari  
Stan's  
Pet Center**

# Togi with Nancy Nentrup



Nancy breeds beautiful Siberian Huskies and Australian Shepherds

**Safari  
Stan's  
Pet Center®**

# Togi visiting with breeder Veterinarians

Dr. Vanarsdale



Dr. Gardner



Dr. Oxford



**Safari  
Stan's  
Pet Center®**

Published on ASPCA (<http://www.asPCA.org>)

[Home](#) > Pet Statistics

## Pet Statistics

How many pets are in the United States?/ How many animals are in shelters?/etc.

Facts about U.S. Animal Shelters:

*There are about 5,000 community animal shelters nationwide that are independent; there is no national organization monitoring these shelters. The terms "humane society" and "SPCA" are generic; shelters using those names are not part of the ASPCA or the Humane Society of the United States. Currently, no government institution or animal organization is responsible for tabulating national statistics for the animal protection movement.*

- Approximately 5 million to 7 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year, and approximately 3 million to 4 million are euthanized (60 percent of dogs and 70 percent of cats). Shelter intakes are about evenly divided between those animals relinquished by owners and those picked up by animal control. These are national estimates; the percentage of euthanasia may vary from state to state.
- According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), less than 2 percent of cats and only 15 to 20 percent of dogs are returned to their owners. Most of these were identified with tags, tattoos or microchips.
- Twenty-five percent of dogs who enter local shelters are purebred. (Source: NCPSP)
- Only 10 percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered, while 78 percent of pet dogs and 88 percent of pet cats are spayed or neutered, according to the American Pet Products Association (Source: APPA).
- More than 20 percent of people who leave dogs in shelters adopted them from a shelter. (Source: NCPSP)

Facts about Pet Ownership in the U.S.:

- About 62 percent of all households in the United States have a pet. (Source: APPA)
- About 78.2 million dogs and about 86.4 million cats are owned in the United States. (Source: APPA)
- According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), about 65

percent of pet owners acquire their pets free or at low cost.

- The majority of pets are obtained from acquaintances and family members. Twenty-six percent of dogs are purchased from breeders, 20 to 30 percent of cats and dogs are adopted from shelters and rescues, and 2 to 10 percent are purchased from pet shops.
- At least one-third of cats are acquired as strays. (Source: APPA)
- More than 20 percent of people who leave dogs in shelters adopted them from a shelter. (Source: NCPPSP)
- The cost of spaying and neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for one year.
- The average cost of basic food, supplies, medical care and training for a dog or cat is \$600 to \$900 annually. Seventy-eight percent of pet dogs and 88 percent of pet cats are spayed or neutered. (Source: APPA)

#### Facts about Pet Overpopulation in the U.S.:

- It is impossible to determine how many stray dogs and cats live in the United States; estimates for cats alone range up to 70 million.
- The average number of litters a fertile cat produces is one to two a year; the average number of kittens is four to six per litter.
- The average number of litters a fertile dog produces is one a year; the average number of puppies is four to six.
- Owned cats and dogs generally live longer, healthier lives than strays.
- Many strays are lost pets who were not kept properly indoors or provided with identification.
- Only 10 percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered, while 78 percent of pet dogs and 88 percent of pet cats are spayed or neutered.
- The cost of spaying or neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for a year.

The following data are ASPCA estimates unless otherwise indicated

You may also wish to visit:

The National Council on Pet Population Study & Policy (NCPSP)  
<http://www.petpopulation.org>

The American Veterinary Medical Association  
<http://www.avma.org> (see U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics)

SB445

To whom it may concern,

Hi, my name is Amanda. I am the main kennel tech at Safari Stan's Pet Center. I used to be against puppy stores simply because I only saw one side of the story. I am against animal cruelty. My motto is "saving one animal won't change the world but it will change the world for that one animal."

Before I started at Safari Stan's I was an internal medicine technician at a local 24 hour emergency hospital. My job was to care for the sick animals under doctor's orders. It wasn't an easy job knowing that the majority of my patients didn't have much longer to live.

For certain reasons I do not wish to disclose I decided to look for a new job. I came across a Safari Stan's ad and decided to take a chance on a puppy store. Because of my boss, Togi, my idea of puppy stores changed. The amount of care we give these animals went above and beyond my expectations. Every morning all puppies get their cages cleaned, blankets, toys, mats etc. to make their journey before finding their forever home a lot more comfortable. All puppies get play time whether it's with a customer or out with an employee. Puppies do not sit in cages all day. I treat each of these puppies as they are my own. We pay strict attention to their eating habits as well as their weights and temperatures. We are the puppy's voice and our main concern is making sure their needs are met.

This is more than a job; it's a passion, a love for animals and providing the best care possible. Every day you are greeted by the puppies' loving barks. These puppies' lives are in my hands to feed, bathe, love and provide that same unconditional love that they give me. What I love most about my position here is seeing the dogs smile, wagging their tails and, above all, the kisses I receive. I enjoy learning from them while they learn from me, but the best part of all is the smiles they leave on clients' faces when the right puppy met its perfect match. It's always hard to say goodbye when you start to form a unique bond with each puppy, but you know they are in great hands. Someday down the road they may come back in to visit and the connection you once had is still there. Nothing can compare to a career like this.

Thank you,

Amanda Carder



1 Bradley Road, Suite 106  
Woodbridge, CT 06525  
March 9, 2014

SB 445

To whom it may concern,

Nearly every Saturday when I am done with a huge number of dull requisite chores necessary to keep a home and 2 offices adequately supplied, I allow myself a delightful treat. I venture into Safari Stan's in Amity Shopping Center to visit their vast array of wonderful animals. These include innumerable small mammals, not all familiar, brightly colored loquacious medium sized birds, and, of course, the fabulous puppies. When I am particularly lucky, I am allowed to play with one of these adorable creatures. I would take any one of them home with me except I already have two rather large mastiffs who don't want any new siblings.

The puppies in the shop are always perfectly groomed, and their living quarters of ample size are meticulous. The names of the breeders are listed so anyone purchasing a pet can easily check on the quality of the breeder. No puppy mill animals in this store, thank goodness.

The store seems always to be filled with people many of whom are just like me, that is, spectators who have come in to enjoy the vast array of potential pets.

An argument made by one of my friends is that pet stores do not check on the suitability of their customers for the purchase of these animals. In this shop, at least, that is blatantly untrue. A large dog who needs to exercise is never sold to an apartment dweller. The staff at Safari Stan's are scrupulous in placing their animals.

You will rob me of my delightful weekend experiences if you close this shop. but that is unimportant. What is critical is that you will be depriving these animals of the opportunity to find kind and loving homes. I urge you to allow business as usual to continue at Safari Stan's for now and for the foreseeable future.

Sincerely,

  
Ann Oberkirch, M.D.

SB445

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been to Safari Stan's Pet Center multiple times because I am dog owner and lover – and I very much enjoy the atmosphere of the space. In fact it's the best atmosphere of a pet shop I've ever been in. I frequently go into Safari Stan's Pet Center just to play with the puppies. When I go in there I notice that the staff is always cleaning the dogs' living areas, playing with the puppies, and giving them lots of extra and much-needed attention as they are growing and developing.

I've spent hours in that store just playing with the puppies in the play areas. They have chew toys and other toys in the play areas, and they always have a bone in their living areas for them to chew on. When I enter the pet store not only do I see the staff playing with the puppies, I also see the owners and lots of customers meeting and greeting the puppies.

The staff and the owners are always urging customers to play with the puppies and give them lots of attention and affection. All the puppies look extremely healthy, happy, and well groomed. On multiple occasions I've seen the dogs getting brushed, fed, and loved. They even have hand sanitizers in the play areas to make sure the puppies are healthy and do not contract any illnesses. They take good care of the puppies and make sure that they stay healthy.

Safari Stan's Pet Center has a great atmosphere and many diverse animals, and lots of interactive spaces of which to play with them. This includes puppies, ferrets, and birds. It is a very interactive and loving environment for any pet. I even know someone who bought a puppy from them and they are very happy. Finally, Safari Stan's Pet Center has brought joy into my life and the staff has been so kind to me and to all the animals each and every time that I've been there.

Sarah Tankoos

*Hamden Resident*

SB445

My name is Sofia Da Silva. As an employee at Safari Stan's Pet Center, I firmly believe that keeping pets in pet stores is vital to animal welfare, consumer choice protection and pet care education. Like many of the people in this room, I have been an "animal person" my whole life. I was initially skeptical about working for a pet store, the image of the dirty, smelly little store filled with cages upon cages of crowded animals filled my head. However, during my interview I began to realize that this experience would be nothing like what I had pictured at all. My now boss, Togi, made it clear how passionate he was about this new business venture. He started to explain Safari Stan's breeder trip policies; how every breeder must be visited before a puppy can be bought from them, the package and warranty that all the puppies come with to assure new owners make their homes as prepared as possible when introducing their new family member and how every petter is open to encourage human-animal interaction and spacious enough for the animals to be comfortable.

I became even more confident in my decision to work there when we started training. Senior staff members from the corporate offices in Chillicothe, OH flew to meet us, congratulate us on our new store and train the new employees. It took a whole 9-plus-hour-a-day week to complete and it covered everything we needed to know when it came to customer service, animal care and presentation. It was so clear to me that everyone there was committed to the animals' welfare, from puppy, to guinea pig, down to the smallest goldfish.

For the first few weeks after opening, it was a real learning process to absorb how all of the products we had in the store would be beneficial to customers. However, the fastest way that I- and I'm sure many of my coworkers will say the same- absorbed this

information was by observing how it affected our animals. I could tell a customer with certainty that their cockatiel really will go crazy for that spray millet or that buying a little pan along with a ferret would just end up in disappointment. It also helped to warn customers of any safety precautions they should take with certain products, like making sure to observe your dog while chewing a rope toy so it doesn't choke on the loose strings. It's a two-way street- the animals would educate me on a product, and in return I would send them home with the best products out there for them.

Pet stores are also extremely important because they are sometimes the first time a person might interact with an animal in a safe and productive way. Having trained employees who can teach the right way to handle a certain pet might change someone's outlook on animals that aren't as well liked, such as rats or snakes and they may even change how a person deals with animals in the future.

Finally, customers deserve a choice in the matter. Having pet stores around doesn't discourage people from going to animal shelters and adopting an animal in need. However, pet stores are regulated so that their puppies and kittens must have vaccinations and information on where the dog comes from. You cannot blame a family for wanting to bring in an animal they have proof of being healthy to avoid costly veterinarian visits and putting any other pets they may have in the house at risk. It's also true that many purebred dogs bring something to the table that shelter dogs simply cannot- and that is selective traits. These are dogs for people who are looking for dogs with specific qualities, such as a certain temperament or a dog who is hypo-allergenic. Customers have the right to make a decision on who they let into their home.

Attacking pet stores takes the blame off of the real culprits: bad breeders. It is with blindness to think that shutting down pet stores will eliminate misconduct in the pet ownership world. What shutting down pet stores is really doing is stopping passionate people from educating the public on animal care, eliminating choice from pet ownership and choosing to further postpone legislation that may actually help animal welfare.

Adams 445

It's July 17, 1955 and the gates to the happiest place on Earth have just opened. All you see is smiling faces and the sound of laughter fills the air. Everything is new like nothing anyone has seen before. Ed Kunzleman was one of many amongst the crowd, eyes wide in shock and awe, and then something amazing happened, an idea like no other; he created a place where pets and people matter the most.

My job at Safari Stan's is more than just a job; it's an escape from the worries of tomorrow. It's impossible to walk into our store after hearing our warm greeting and not smile. Every day I meet new people new families new children new pets that all leave feeling the same way, happy.

It's the most amazing feeling in the world to be able to go into work and make people happy by educating them about animals and allowing them to have a hands on experience by that some people have on a regular basis. We encourage everyone to love on our animals and ask questions and just have fun. Puppies provide companionship, comfort and love. Many customers come in just for a chance for puppy kisses like my two favorite volunteers Devon and Hayden. Who come in every Saturday with their mom, Jessica just to play with puppies and to have a chance to socialize with all of our animals because they don't have any pets at home.

I love my job, and the community loves just how passionate we are about our animals and how dedicated we are to enhancing the human animal bond.

Chantel Adams

Burnett 445

As a current employee at Safari Stan's pet center, animal husbandry is our first priority in this company. When I thought about working at a pet store I was hesitant about it. All the bad experiences I had of pet stores with the smells of unchanged bedding and animals that looked deprived of nutrition and animal hygiene I was being a skeptic. When I meet my boss Togi, he took my mind from hesitation to certainty of a lasting career by expressing how he feels about his animals which he referred them by "my babies" being first in this company. When Togi started to explain how he went on breeder trips to visit the puppies and the breeders I knew that Togi really was serious about his babies and their well being.

When it came to training it was clear that animal care was first followed by customer service then presentation. when it comes to our animals "our pet counselors are dedicated to matching the right pet with right customer and meeting the needs of both to our customers who already have pets, we are dedicated to enhancing their knowledge and enjoyment of the human-animal bond ". That is our mission statement that I proudly say and tell people. when customers come into the store I'm their to educate them on our animals and what they need to live a long healthy life and also making sure that their new owners understands the value and needs of their new family member . Safari Stan's pet center makes life better not only our customers but their employees too.

Avaerah Burnett



Testimony in Support of SB 445AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE SALE OF  
CATS AND DOGS FROM INHUMANE ORIGINS AT CONNECTICUT PET SHOPS.

Submitted by:

**Susan B. Linker, Chief Executive Officer, Our Companions Animal Rescue**

Volunteer and member, CT Votes for Animals

March 15, 2014

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of SB445 with a provision to include an additional recommendation from Task Force. I would also like to thank the members of the Task Force for the time they spent considering this issue and for their final recommendations.

SB 445 includes several laudable recommendations, however, we hoped that this bill would also be amended to include the 8th recommendation of the Task Force which would require new pet shops established in the state to only obtain their cats and dogs through the use of humane sourcing.

The task force finding was that the group believes that "pet shops first licensed after a certain date, to be determined by the legislature, should be required to source their animals from humane origins. Such requirement could eventually establish Connecticut as a model for other states to follow and therefore have a positive effect on the health and welfare of cats and dogs that are brought into the state for purchase by Connecticut residents. This requirement would not apply to a current pet shop licensee who is required to relocate such business due to a hardship or other circumstance."

In addition we also hoped the legislature would consider a phase-out for the 16 pet shops who continue to sell puppy mill animals.

Simply put we would like our state to be the first to lead the nation in ending the practice of selling puppy mill animals. Even with the best regulations in our state, we cannot regulate the activity in the puppy mills that operate in other states.

To go down a road of discussing violations, direct or indirect is in my opinion futile, as the standards by which dogs in puppy mills are allowed to be kept per the American Welfare Act are so minimal that most would consider them to be survival standards at best. Dogs in puppy mills suffer emotionally and physically and live their miserable lives in horrible conditions.

I'm not suggesting that people in our state should not be able to purchase puppies, In fact CT has many local reputable breeders, and with the thousands of animals who are recurrently in our shelters, there is no good reason to support puppy mills in order to find puppies and wonderful family companions.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support and strengthen this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,



Susan B. Linker  
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Maureen C. Moriarty  
42 Crescent Drive  
Bristol, CT 06010

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5080  
Moriarty 445  
5416

March 17, 2014

I've always adopted homeless dogs & cats, so like many people, I didn't understand the connection between puppy mills and pet shops, until I started researching. That's what brought me here today to speak.

I support SB 445. But I strongly urge my CT legislators to amend it to include the following two requirements that were recommended by last year's bipartisan Task Force:

- 1. an immediate ban on the sale of commercially-bred dogs in any new pet shop opening in CT**
- 2. a phase-out of their sale in the 16 shops that now sell them**

To understand why these are crucial requirements, you have to know three things:

**1<sup>st</sup>**, commercial breeders are legally allowed to confine their dogs in inhumane quarters. The federal law governing them (ironically named the Animal Welfare Act) is in dire need of overhaul, and that's simply not going to happen. Believe it or not, under this act, all manner of unacceptable practices are allowed, such as tiny stacked cages with wire bottoms – *which means excrement falling onto the dogs in the cages below* - poorly-ventilated kennels, dirty food bowls, inadequate access to water, untreated illnesses and injuries, females confined 24/7 solely for breeding purposes, and females bred continually until they're no longer of any value to the owners of these places. Is it any wonder that puppy mill puppies have a high incidence of congenital diseases and other health problems?

**2<sup>nd</sup>**, there simply aren't enough USDA Inspectors to get around to all the commercial breeders in this country. And even when they do perform inspections, they apply standards that the average dog owner would reject as not being good enough to ensure the basic health and safety of the dogs.

**3<sup>rd</sup>**, in 2009, the CT Legislature passed a law requiring pet shops to furnish the State Dept of Agriculture with breeder and broker information for the pets they sell. That's what made it possible to establish the connection between the out-of-state commercial breeders aka puppy mills, and CT shops.

Incidentally, if anyone would like to know more about the sources currently being used by the 16 pet shops in this state that sell puppies, just read the 54-page report compiled and submitted as testimony to the Legislative Task Force last December, if you can get through it; I had to stop about half-way through because the deprivation and cruelty revealed was heartbreaking. But the statistics are there, in plain view.

SB 445 as it stands, without those 2 requirements, does not provide adequate safeguards against animal abuse. In fact, sadly, it would allow the abuse to continue.

With regard to the 16 shop owners who would be directly affected by the phase-out, I understand that this requirement means they would have to find other sources from which to obtain dogs. And yes, this would be a change in their business practice. I was a small business owner in Bristol at one time, so I do appreciate their point of view about being forced to make the change. But my business suppliers didn't engage in animal abuse in order to deliver their product to me. If those pet shop proprietors want to sell puppies, they can most certainly find them at the Humane Society, at animal shelters, and through rescue groups. In doing so, they'll be following a humane pet store model that's becoming more popular across the country. Eventually, if enough people take a stand that eliminates the market for puppy mill dogs, puppy mills will eventually be eliminated. Let's take a firm step in that direction, and add these 2 requirements to SB 445.

With regard to HB 5416, the ban on so-called "gestation crates" in CT: Since CT farmers do not use them, and even well-known agribusinesses such as Smithfield Foods and Hormel have announced that they will end this hideous practice, it's not difficult to grasp that these contraptions function as slow torture chambers for the animals. You only need to look at one picture of sows lying on their sides in them, and understand that they're kept in them for YEARS on end, to have a visceral reaction to the

Lewin 5080  
445  
5416

Public hearing testimony March 17, 2014 before the Environment Committee

**SUPPORT HB 5416** (section 2): Would ban gestation crates**SUPPORT SB 445** ("puppy mill bill"): With additional requirements

- 1) No new pet shops shall sell commercially-bred dogs
- 2) For current pet shops, a phase-out of the sale of commercially-bred dogs. *This addition is vital to combat the puppy mill trade.*

**OPPOSE HB 5080**: Sunday bow-hunting for deer

To Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Members of the Environment Committee:

I am grateful to you for providing this opportunity to speak for Connecticut's animals.

In support of **HB 5416**, providing minimum protection from barbaric animal husbandry practices is painfully overdue.

In support of **SB 445**, regulation does not work! For more than 50 years, probably every national media outlet has broadcast or published multiple horrific exposes of the pet store-puppy mill industry. For decades, the largest and most powerful animal welfare charities, and state charities in states which produce the most puppy mill puppies, have attempted to achieve serious oversight and reasonably humane minimum standards of care.

Yet: Legally required minimum standards of care remain gravely inadequate, remarkably, extraordinarily backward in contrast to community norms. Yet we know that routinely even these mere survival standards are violated. Please please imagine your own dog living thus. It is in your power to reduce this trade by supporting **SB 445** with the inclusions above.

In opposition to **HB 5080**,

- Any hunting on Sunday whatsoever is as ill-advised as it has always been.
- Can't the 99% of the state's population who don't hunt have at least one day a week to hike without fear or enjoy their own backyards without fear?
- So-called safety regulations for bow and arrow are ludicrous, not remotely adequate to protect people from being killed, blinded, or otherwise maimed.
- Archery is the cruelest form of hunting—read hunters magazines to learn what hunters themselves say!
- Why in 2014 would we expand such opportunities? That would be moving in the wrong direction in terms of public attitudes toward animals.
- It is false science to maintain that such hunting would limit the population growth of deer. The opposite is true: Hunted populations are more fertile, so a rebound effect results in even more deer.

Thank you so very much for considering my testimony.

Julie Lewin  
6 Long Hill Farm  
Guilford, CT 06437-1866 [jlewin@igc.org](mailto:jlewin@igc.org)

Kealey 5081

## TESTIMONY OF JACK KEALEY

March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 before the Environment Committee**SUPPORTING** : Section #2 of HB 5416 - gestation crate banSB 445 - sale of puppy mill dogs**OPPOSING**: HB 5080 - Sunday hunting

Representative Gentile, Senator Meyer, and Members of the Environment Committee,

Hello, my name is Jack Kealey and I am a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student. I would like to thank the Environment Committee for bringing up these bills because they are a great concern of mine.

One of them is HB 5080 which would allow hunting on Sundays. I am opposed to this bill because only 1% of Connecticut's constituents hunt and 99% should feel free to hike and picnic without worry at least one day of the week. Also kids have a higher risk of getting hurt if hunting is allowed on Sundays because lots of kids like to hike and play in the woods on a weekend when school is out.

I am also supporting section #2 of HB 5416 which would ban gestation crates in Connecticut. I support this bill because pigs should not go through the horror of gestation crates. While in gestation crates, they cannot turn around, walk, or barely even move because the crates are so small. Pigs live in gestation crates pretty much their entire lives. Though there are no gestation crates that we know of in Connecticut, it would be good to ban them now so they don't come later.

Finally I am in support of SB 445 which would stop pet stores from selling puppy mill dogs in the state of Connecticut. Puppy mills are where dogs live before being sent to pet shops. There is no light, no toys, and no bones to play with. People have seen dead dogs in the puppy mills because these puppy mills are so horrible! They should be banned. I would not want to go into a puppy mill and hear the barking of dogs as they're going through horror and misery. It's truly animal cruelty. You may think you're doing something good by buying a puppy and getting rid of their misery in the puppy mill, but you're not. Once one puppy leaves, they are immediately replaced with another.

Though there are none we know of in the state of Connecticut, I want to stop pet stores from buying puppy mill dogs from other states and encourage other states to join along. I ask you to please add wording to the bill so pet shops get their dogs from rescue groups or shelters instead of puppy mills.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today and if you have any questions and I don't know the answer, I'll be sure to get back to you.

Jack Kealey