



Dedicated to the elimination of pain, fear and suffering in all animals.

## Prohibiting the Sale of Companion Animals in Pet Stores

The Humane Society of Utah offers the following talking points in support of establishing a city ordinance that would require pet stores to obtain dogs, cats, and rabbits from shelters and rescues. We encourage pet stores to become part of the pet overpopulation solution rather than continuing to add to the problem.

More than 230 cities in the U.S. have laws that regulate the sale of companion animals. Pet store ordinances have been upheld in 4 federal district courts (in Rhode Island, Florida, Illinois, and Arizona), and in courts in Chicago and New York City, and have never been struck down.

- **Pet store ordinances protect consumers**
  - Pet stores do not obtain dogs from responsible breeders because responsible breeders do not sell puppies to pet stores. Ninety-six percent of national clubs include statements in their Codes of Ethics that their breeders should not and/or do not sell to pet stores.
  - A local ordinance would not affect responsible breeders selling from their homes.
  
- **Pet store puppies are often sick and have behavioral problems**
  - Puppies in pet stores are often sick because they are born into deplorable conditions, taken from their mothers very early, exposed to a wide range of diseases, and very susceptible to genetic disorders
  - A 2013 study published in the *Journal of American Veterinary Medicine*, titled “Differences in behavioral characteristics between dogs obtained as puppies from pet stores and those obtained from noncommercial breeders,” concluded that obtaining dogs from pet stores versus noncommercial breeders represented a significant risk factor for the development of a wide range of undesirable behavioral characteristics, especially aggressive behavior and biting. Due to the results of the study, the authors stated that they could not recommend that puppies be obtained from pet stores.
  
- **Pet shop ordinances are business friendly**
  - Pet store ordinances are designed to require pet stores to obtain animals from humane sources, not to put pet stores out of business.
  - The largest and most successful pet store chains in the country (PetSmart and Petco) do not sell puppies.
  - Humane model pet store owners credit their success to having a better reputation in the community.



Dedicated to the elimination of pain, fear and suffering in all animals.

- **Pet shop ordinances support shelters and rescues**
  - Ordinances encouraging consumers to adopt lessens the burden on shelters that take in pet store dogs. Data show that shelter intake and euthanasia rates decline in cities that prohibit the sale of puppy mill dogs.
  - Many pet store dogs end up in shelters because they come with a wide range of behavioral problems—a result of a lack of necessary socialization.
  
- **Federal and state laws do not protect consumers or dogs**
  - Utah does not have a Pet Lemon Law.
  - The AKC, who is funded by the puppy mill industry, agrees that “the best way for a person to obtain a new pet is through personal interaction with the pet’s breeder and the pet under consideration.” When purchasing a puppy from a pet store, this is simply not possible.
  - USDA explains on its website FAQ page, “we do not ‘certify’ establishments. . . a USDA license is not a ‘seal of approval’ but rather a legal designation that a facility has successfully passed its pre-license inspection and is legally entitled to use regulated animals for regulated activities.”
  - Even if a breeder complies with all USDA requirements, a breeder can keep animals in extremely inhumane conditions.
  
- City residents should not have to accept the importing of puppies from puppy mills or backyard breeders while their tax dollars are spent sheltering and euthanizing homeless dogs in shelters.
  
- The Humane Society of Utah, Best Friends Animal Society, The Humane Society of the United States, the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, and the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals all support a humane model for pet stores.

Thank you for considering such an important ordinance.