



NJ COALITION OF RESPONSIBLE PET STORES

New Jersey Municipalities Should Know the Truth About Pet Shop Ordinances

The New Jersey Coalition of Responsible Pet Stores would like to share with you information about efforts organized by a handful of animal rights activists seeking to encourage municipalities to ban the sale of dogs in pet stores through the enactment of a template ordinance. If you have not already heard from volunteers from the Humane Society of the United States and other groups about such a proposal, we have no doubt that you will soon.

The goal of the national lobbying interests who developed this ordinance has been to monopolize the retail pet marketplace with fee-based adoptions. Rescues and shelters offering such adoptions already dominate the pet marketplace, but the approval of these ordinances across the country is designed to help give them the monopoly they seek. There are no good public policy reasons for this ordinance, only ones that benefit special interests who have a self-serving, monopolistic goals. The template ordinance is based on false and misleading findings about pet stores, our breeders, and the health of the beautiful dogs we place with families throughout New Jersey.

You may view such a proposal as an easy ordinance to pass in your municipality, as there would be no one harmed because no pet shop sells dogs – there are only about 18 such stores in the entire state. But, such an ordinance is not about what is best for your residents. The activist community supports the introduction and passage of an ordinance so that they can add your municipality's name to the bottom of a list, so that a state director can check off a box on his performance review, and so that they can go to the New Jersey Legislature to urge the introduction of statewide legislation my misrepresenting support for such action.

Please know, not one of the ordinances previously approved in New Jersey has passed in a municipality with a pet shop because the local officials from these towns recognize that our businesses are good community partners and serve a need. We urge you to use your existing zoning and police powers to determine if a pet shop should be licensed on its individual merits when a potential pet shop operator seeks the necessary approvals rather than enact an ineffective ban. Not one puppy mill in the United States has closed as a result of these ordinances.

What the opponents of our stores will not tell you is that pet stores are already statutorily prohibited from selling a dog from a puppy mill in New Jersey. New Jersey's Pet Purchase Protection Act (PPPA) is the strictest law of its kind in the country and negates the need for your municipality to adopt an ordinance. All puppies sold in pet stores in New Jersey must come from breeders licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and comply with very strict standards of care. Complementary state and federal laws ensure that New Jersey has the most comprehensive animal welfare standards for pet stores in the country. The activist community claims that pet shops only sell puppy mill puppies by conflating USDA licensed breeders with imagery depicting sub-standard, large-scale breeding facilities that could not pass the multiple levels of governmental oversight required of USDA licensed breeders. [Click here to see video and pictures of our actual breeders.](#)

New Jersey's Division of Consumer Affairs inspectors are actively enforcing the PPPA and make regular inspections of our stores and have access to the statutorily required documentation that demonstrates compliance. We encourage consistent regulation, which serves to protect animal welfare far better than outright bans.

Please also know that pet stores are the only option in New Jersey that guarantees animal health and consumer protections with a full refund for sick puppies and a requirement that the store cover the costs of veterinary care. Shelters and rescues have no similar statutory obligations.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and to share additional details about an ordinance that will actually serve to advance animal welfare should you consider the introduction of a related ordinance in your municipality.

We believe strongly that pet shops and rescues can both operate to help families find new pets. But, the choice to shop or adopt should remain with the consumer.