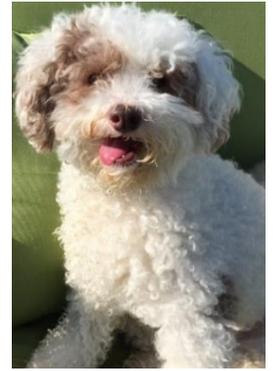


# Pennsylvania Puppy Retail Sales Bill



*Learn more about Yankee, a puppy mill rescue, below*

The legislation will prohibit the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in pet stores unless sourced from shelters and rescues, close the loophole in the outdoor sales law, and require advertisers to include license numbers.

## **This bill will protect Pennsylvania consumers from a flawed sales model.**

- The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) investigations reveal time and time again that pet stores dupe consumers into supporting cruel puppy mills by lying about where their puppies come from.
- Consumers often spend thousands of dollars caring for sick pet store puppies, in some cases, only to suffer the heartbreak of their new pet dying.
- Consumers often end up with behaviorally challenged puppies who were not properly socialized by the mill nor the pet store, and struggle to transition from life in a cage to life in a family.
- The CDC<sup>1</sup> has linked contact with pet store puppies to an outbreak of an antibiotic resistant strain of *Campylobacter* that has infected 97 people in 17 states, causing 22 of them to be hospitalized, likely the result of pet stores pumping sick puppies with antibiotics to appear healthy to consumers. There are five reported cases in Pennsylvania so far.

## **This bill will promote animal welfare, adoption and responsible breeders.**

- It is well-documented and indisputable by anyone outside of the puppy mill pipeline that puppy mills (inhumane commercial breeding facilities that disregard the well-being of dogs for profit) supply pet stores with puppies; documentation shows that Pennsylvania pet stores are no exception.
- Cutting off the puppy mill to pet store supply chain will decrease the demand for puppies raised in puppy mills considered shocking, appalling, and unacceptable by the majority of Pennsylvania constituents.
- This bill will help shift the pet market towards humane sources, including shelters and rescues that are burdened with finding families for homeless pets, thousands of whom are euthanized each year in Pennsylvania alone.
- Responsible breeders, who care deeply for their dogs, will continue to provide Pennsylvanians with healthy, socialized dogs. These breeders will not be impacted by this bill because they do not sell to pet stores, as their breed clubs discourage it and demand to meet buyers in person.

## **This bill is business friendly.**

- Stores that sell commercially raised puppies operate based on an outdated and socially unacceptable business model, and are an outlier in their own industry.
- The huge majority of pet stores, including the largest and most successful chains and small mom and pop shops, do not sell puppies, proving that pet stores do not need to sell puppies to be successful.
- Pets Plus Natural, with five locations in Pennsylvania, used to sell commercially raised puppies but switched to the humane model after learning of the high kill rates in shelters. To date, they have adopted out over 8,000 animals and business is thriving. The owners credit their success to having a much better reputation in the community.
- The HSUS pet store conversion<sup>2</sup> staff assists Pennsylvania's puppy-selling pet stores with conversion to a humane model that does not rely on the sale of puppies from cruel mills.

## **This bill will codify into state law ordinances passed by Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.**

- Philadelphia and Pittsburgh unanimously passed ordinances prohibiting the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops, unless obtained from a shelter or rescue. The Philadelphia law includes outdoor sales restrictions similar to this bill, and the Pittsburgh law includes advertising language similar to this bill.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/campylobacter/outbreaks/puppies-9-17/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/puppy\\_mills/facts/puppy\\_friendly\\_pet\\_stores.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/](http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/puppy_mills/facts/puppy_friendly_pet_stores.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/)

- More than 250 localities in the U.S., as well as the state of California, have passed similar laws.

**Federal and state laws do not adequately protect animals or consumers.**

- Pennsylvania law currently does not regulate where pet stores source puppies and does little to protect consumers beyond requiring meager reimbursement for sick puppies.
- Federally licensed breeders face minimal USDA regulation. Standards of care are shockingly low, allowing breeding dogs to spend their entire lives in filthy wire cages only 6 inches larger than the dog; and enforcement is severely lacking, according to the USDA itself. Contrary to pet store rhetoric, a USDA license does not disqualify a facility from being a puppy mill.
- The USDA is redacting all pertinent information from animal welfare inspection reports posted on their website and available via public records requests. It is considering allowing third party inspections of commercial breeders, which would likely result in a self-regulated puppy mill industry.

**This bill will remove a loophole in the outdoor sales law.**

- Under current law, a licensed kennel can sell a dog at any public place in the Commonwealth. A license does not guarantee a breeder is humane and selling healthy puppies, which is why the exemption for licensed kennels will be removed under this bill.
- Purchasing a puppy at a remote location makes it impossible to see the parents of the puppies or the conditions in which they were raised—making it the perfect sales venue for unscrupulous dealers.
- Young puppies are often outside in the cold or blistering heat for far too long, and puppies that are not sold may simply be let loose. Moreover, consumers who end up with sick puppies have no way of contacting the breeder for additional information, reimbursement of veterinary bills, etc.
- Arizona, California, Maryland and Virginia have similar laws.

**This bill will provide transparency in advertising.**

- Both licensed and unlicensed puppy mills rely on deceptive advertising to sell puppies because they know if their description of their facility and photos were accurate no one would buy from them.
- By requiring those with federal, state and/or local licenses to include that license number(s) in all advertisements, consumers will be able to research licensed kennels and be alerted to unlicensed ones.
- Requiring license numbers will also give enforcement officers an opportunity to identify unlicensed breeders and offer an extra incentive for breeders to comply with the law.
- In 2009, the Pennsylvania court shut down a puppy mill after the owners, who previously settled the state’s largest-ever consumer fraud case for selling sick dogs to more than 171 customers, failed to comply with a court order over 800 times that required them to identify themselves in advertisements. At the time, the couple held a Dog Law kennel license allowing them to house over 500 dogs.<sup>3</sup>

**Yankee’s story.**

Yankee, a puppy mill survivor, and his human parents support this bill because they know the horrors of puppy mills. When he was rescued, Yankee was terrified, matted, smelled awful and had paw infections, filthy ears, and dental disease. He currently suffers from a heart murmur and often coughs and chokes due to scar tissue buildup in his throat, which is the result of being debarked. He is emotionally scarred from his five years as a puppy mill-breeding dog, but continues to make progress. When puppy mills no longer have pet stores to supply their puppies to, far less dogs will be forced to endure what Yankee did.

**STATUS:** HB XX introduced by Representative Jason Ortity + X co-sponsors and SB XX introduced by Senator Guy Reschenthaler + X co-sponsors. Referred to House and Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee. Contact your State Senator and Representative and ask them to sign on as a co-sponsor. To find your legislator’s contact info visit [www.legis.state.pa.us](http://www.legis.state.pa.us) under “Find My Legislator”. For more info, contact Kristen Tullo of The HSUS – [ktullo@humanesociety.org](mailto:ktullo@humanesociety.org) or (717) 440-5527.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://lanasteronline.com/news/kennel-closed-fined/article\\_9b07cce4-6710-589e-b80f-d1f6ca2daf28.html](http://lanasteronline.com/news/kennel-closed-fined/article_9b07cce4-6710-589e-b80f-d1f6ca2daf28.html)