



RETAIL PET **SALE BANS**

Stopping the Puppy Mill Pipeline

Puppy mills are inhumane commercial dog-breeding facilities that operate without regard for the animals' well-being. Puppy mill operators maximize their profits by producing large numbers of puppies as quickly as possible. As a result, unsanitary conditions, disease, and neglect are rampant. Dogs are crammed into cramped, filthy metal cages and given spoiled food and putrid water. These dogs receive little, if any, veterinary care. Mother "breeder" dogs give birth to multiple litters every year and are typically abandoned or killed when no longer deemed useful.

Virtually all animals sold in pet stores come from puppy mills. Retail pet sale bans prohibit pet stores from selling puppies, kittens, and sometimes other animals like rabbits sourced from mills. Instead, stores can offer animals available for adoption by partnering with animal shelters and rescue organizations.

LACK OF REGULATION AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Puppy mills are regulated by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). But the AWA provides minimal protections for these dogs, and enforcement is extremely lax. Many puppy mills are USDA-licensed either because their operations meet the low standards required by the AWA or because the USDA has failed to revoke their licenses despite a long history of violations.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND ANIMALS

Pet stores routinely defraud unsuspecting consumers by misrepresenting the health and origin of their puppies. Stores claim their puppies are sourced from "family" or "small" breeders when they are actually from puppy mills. Consumers realize that the stores' claims are false when their puppies become seriously ill, and sometimes die, soon after purchase. These families are left heartbroken and with thousands of dollars in veterinary bills. Surviving animals often struggle with lifelong health and behavioral issues.

A GROWING TREND ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Nearly 300 cities and counties including Cook County (Chicago), Philadelphia, El Paso, and Atlanta have passed retail pet sale bans. Additionally, two states, California and Maryland, enacted retail pet sale bans in 2017 and 2018 respectively.



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