

The Humane Pet Sales Bill

Washington's Humane Pet Sales Bill is an animal welfare and consumer protection measure that will drive the pet market towards more humane sources like responsible breeders, shelters, and rescue organizations while addressing the known problems with puppy mills and kitten factories.

Reduces Demand for Puppy Mill Puppies

In 2009, Washington passed landmark legislation to ban puppy mills. These mills are large-scale dog breeding operations that subject hundreds of breeding dogs and their puppies to constant confinement and inhumane conditions. This was a crucial step toward eradicating these types of operations in Washington. However, a decade after passing the puppy mill ban, the sale of puppies from puppy mills continues to take place in our state every day. This is mainly because a small handful of pet stores in our state purchase their animals from out of state puppy mills and sell these puppies to the public.



Rescued by Pasado's Safe Haven

Business Friendly

The majority of pet stores in Washington are already in compliance with this legislation because they do not sell puppies, instead they sell pet products and offer care or grooming services. Many stores also host adoption events with local shelters and rescue organizations as a way to give back to their communities, bring customers to their stores, and provide dogs with a whole new audience of possible adopters. Under this legislation, any pet store owner currently selling puppies would be allowed time to transition their business model away from selling puppy mill puppies to selling products and services.



Rep. Walen and her dogs

Supports Responsible Breeders and Consumer Choice

People in the market for a new puppy would purchase their puppy in the way most people currently do: from a responsible breeder or pet adoption/rescue organization. Responsible breeders would not be impacted by this bill because they do not sell to pet stores and instead are part of breed clubs that promote transparency and discourage sending puppies to stores. Please refer to the Responsible Breeder handout to see the difference between buying directly from a breeder vs. a pet store. There is no evidence that passage of the bill would drive people to purchase dogs and cats through unregulated internet sources because most pet stores rely on window shoppers and impulse buys, which are often accompanied by high interest financing plans.

Protects Consumers

Pet stores lack transparency and accountability around the cost and condition of the puppies they sell. Investigations have consistently revealed that pet stores charge premium prices with baseless guarantees that puppies are healthy, socialized, and come from humane, highly regulated breeders. In reality, most pet store puppies are born in puppy mills that raise dogs in conditions the general public would find appalling. Consumers who purchase a pet store puppy often come to learn that their new puppy has an unknown medical history (or underlying medical conditions) and spend thousands of dollars caring for their sick pet, in some cases only to suffer the heartbreak of their new pet dying.



Pasado's Safe Haven Adoption event

Preserves Public Health

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns consumers about the risks of pet store puppies. The CDC stated that 95% of pet store puppies received antibiotics at, or before arriving at, a pet store indicating stores recklessly overuse these drugs knowing puppies are likely to be sick. Between 2016 - 2019 over 140 Americans have been sickened with an antibiotic-resistant strain of *Campylobacter* causing dozens to be hospitalized across more than 20 states.

Addresses a Legislative Loophole

While Washington has regulations in place for dog breeders that require them to adhere to certain standards of care, unfortunately there is no regulatory oversight, rendering the law useless. Even if we were to tighten the regulatory oversight for in-state breeders, this would not address the problem as most pet store puppies come from out of state. Some states have their own commercial breeder laws, but it is most frequently done through the USDA. A USDA-licensed breeder is required to adhere to only basic survival standards and enforcement is severely lacking, therefore a USDA license does not guarantee that a breeder is humane -- which is why we need the Humane Pet Sales bill in Washington.

3 states and over 360 localities across the nation have already enacted humane pet sale laws. It is time for Washington to do the same.