

Edwin Sayres  
9393 Midnight Pass Road  
Sarasota, FL 34242

Dear Chairman & Members of the Ohio House Finance Committee:

My name is Ed Sayres and I am the former President of the ASPCA from 2003 to 2013 and currently serve as Senior Advisor of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council. I am here to offer proponent testimony to support the pet store regulatory amendment in HB 166.

I am going to address two issues: Protecting the consumer and eliminating puppy mills. But first, I would like to offer some historical background information.

In 1974 the United States had a population of 220 million people and we owned 50 million dogs. Americans acquired 4-5 million dogs per year and animal shelters euthanized 12-15 million dogs per year. Pet overpopulation was at a tragic level.

Today we have 320 million people and we own 83 million dogs. Americans will acquire 7-8 million dogs this year and animal shelters will euthanize 1.2 million dogs this year.

Demand far exceeds supply.

As President of the ASPCA I authorized over a dozen deployments to rescue puppies and dogs from substandard puppy mills. We rescued approximately 2,500 puppies and dogs through those deployments.

Not one of those facilities were USDA licensed breeders and none of those puppies were headed for a pet store. it is ILLEGAL for a pet store to buy puppies from a facility that is not licensed by the USDA.

As a strong pet advocate, I wholeheartedly believe that pet adoption should be your first option. I do not believe however that is your ONLY option. I have been advocating for the adoption of shelter animals for 41 years and I will continue to do so.

It is perfectly acceptable however, if an Ohio consumer chose to acquire their next dog from a pet store. For some they want to raise a puppy and be assured that they know the breeder was in compliance with state and federal regulations. For others they want to come to the store to learn about a variety of puppies before they make their decision. Many want the assurance that there is consumer protection policies administered by the store if there are any problems

with their new puppy.

If the ultimate societal goal is to eliminate puppy mills we must understand that it is a shared goal of the pet industry and animal welfare organizations. In recent years state legislation to improve breeder standards has resulted in the closure of thousands of puppy mills. Pet store sale bans have closed none.

The pet industry is supporting the efforts of national animal welfare organizations to improve breeder standards at the federal level. The industry is also investing in a research project with the Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine to establish scientific standards for commercial dog breeding.

We can best protect the consumers of Ohio through reasoned regulations and the ability to choose where to purchase a pet. We can eliminate puppy mills in this country by working together to improve breeder standards and create pet store buying standards at the state and federal level.

The foundation of good governance is reason and fact not rhetoric and anecdotes.

If you want to end puppy mills then it doesn't make sense to ban the responsible breeders who are NOT puppy mills. Pet stores are one of the safest and most regulated sources to purchase a new puppy.

With a ban you eliminate the responsible breeders. There are cities, counties and states that have passed Regulations NOT Bans to allow responsible breeders to sell puppies and eliminate puppy mills.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my perspective on this issue.

Sincerely,

Edwin Sayres  
Senior Advisor  
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC)  
202-452-1525, ext 1090  
[edwin@pijac.org](mailto:edwin@pijac.org)