



Petland, Inc.  
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### **Testimony in Support**

I am here today to ask for your support for the pet store legislation, which will create a statewide standard for all pet stores to ensure that only respected and reputable sources of breeders and others are being utilized in Ohio.

Ohio took a bold step in 2013 and now enjoys the distinction of having the highest breeding standards in the United States.

Now, Ohio has the opportunity to be the national leader in the creation of the highest pet store buying standards in the country.

I'm not just speaking for the pet industry, but also as an individual who wants to choose confidently where I purchase my pets

There has been a lot of activity supporting the raising of standards in Ohio and, contrary to popular opinion, the pet industry has been **very** supportive, and in many cases, proactive.

In fact, we were the only major retailer who supported Ohio's high-volume breeder bill in 2013 that provided new breeding standards. (SB 130) and we also support higher standards at the federal level.

This amendment is a logical next step to protect pets and to protect Ohioans.

This amendment will ensure that when an Ohio family decides to purchase a puppy, they have a resource that provides full transparency that their

puppy is coming from a place that not only exceeds the USDA standards, but also exceeds Ohio's standards.

3 states have passed state buying standards and the fourth, Arizona, is just awaiting the governor's signature.

Unfortunately, emotionally charged propaganda has been influencing ordinances that eliminate pets from regulated and inspected kennels while promoting and encouraging pets from unregulated facilities.

We've seen the stories about consumers buying puppies online, and even about rescues buying from breeders.

These unregulated facilities are the problem.

We even have evidence of dog rescue groups recently buying puppies at a Missouri dog auction from a large-scale substandard breeder who is on Petland's "**Do Not Buy**" list, in other words, they do NOT meet our standards.

However, the Grove City ordinance makes it legal for Petland to obtain puppies from that bad breeder as long as we purchase those dogs through the rescues.

These are the unintended consequences of emotionally charged local ordinances. We have to look at the facts.

You will more than likely hear stories about sick puppies. Yes, puppies are living beings and sometimes get sick. But the instances are rare. In fact, Pawsitive Solutions, a third-party organization that handles pet health claims did a survey and found less than 5% of puppies sold from pet stores had a medical claim and less than 1% had a congenital or hereditary disorder.

We are a nearly 50 year-old family owned business founded and still based in southern Ohio. More than 200,000 Ohioans walk through our doors every month. That's 2.4 million a year.

In the state of Ohio, Petland has 17 pet stores and nearly 500 Ohio employees. We cannot operate our business with 17 different sets of rules in the state. It's impossible.

Ohio needs to set an example.

Without such legislation, not only would this be a loss of businesses and a loss of employees, it's a loss of a great many community service efforts within the state.

Last month, Petland hosted the fourth annual Dog Breeder Symposium with the Ohio Professional Dog Breeders Association, the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the American Kennel Club.

This is an annual education event, discussing science-based standards of care, presented by veterinarians, scientists and other experts.

More than 240 professional breeders were in attendance.

Currently, Petland is supporting 26 Canine units (Police, Fire and a Therapy Dog) across ten Ohio counties with either a feeding program, fundraising or supplies.

Petland regionally provides more than \$10,000 in support annually to the Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana Make A Wish Foundation.

We provide grants to teachers for Pets in the Classroom programs.

We host adoption days with shelters and rescues that work with us to find pets homes.

Families will always want to have pets. That human-animal bond is not going to go away.

Nor is the desire to have a specific pet, whether it be a dog, a cat, a purebred or a rescue.

Passing this amendment will help protect Ohio families.

And, this is an enforceable amendment.

Each store will have its own license.

And, with an online, public database of inspection records that anyone can view, and documentation provided at the store level, it will be easy to regulate and verify that stores are in compliance.

Please support this amendment.

Please support your local businesses and employees.

And please support Ohioan's rights to choose where they purchase their pet.