

Opponent Testimony

Chairman Hackett, Vice Chairman Hoagland, Ranking Member O'Brien and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Rabbi Areyah Kaltmann. I live in Columbus.

Ohio is a proud state full of dog lovers. We are also a state that cares about the dogs living in shelters and rescues. Many of my family members and friends often choose to adopt a dog from a rescue or shelter. You may be familiar with the free national listing services like Petfinder and Adopt A Pet. These sites make it easy for a family to look for a rescue dog or pup in the comfort of their home.

These national sites have saved thousands of homeless dogs. Sadly, they have created a pipeline for unscrupulous people using the "rescue" label to play on the kind intentions of families who want to rescue a dog. These "rescue brokers" purchase puppies from breeder to adopt, or more appropriately, sell these pups as rescued puppies.

Not only are these puppies not rescued, they are sold at much higher fees than reputable rescues. There is no difference in getting a puppy from the rescue brokers than from buying from a pet store.

You will see several examples of these fraudulent rescue brokers on the following page. Although we can't outlaw what they are doing, we can clearly define what a rescue is and deter their practice of buying from breeders and reselling to the unsuspecting consumers in Ohio. The solution is as simple as prohibiting their ability to compensate a breeder for a dog or puppy.

We also need the cooperation of the State of Ohio Dept. of Agriculture to list rescues on their website. This consumer protection measure will give families the ability to check the AG web site when they come across an online ad for a homeless dog or puppy. With just a few clicks, families can have more confidence that the cute little puppy their children are begging them to adopt, is with a rescue the State of Ohio is relatively sure is not just a dog broker disguised with a rescue name.

The rescues were listed on the State site but have been removed. Not only should the rescues be returned to the web site for easy access, but, as the USDA does with USDA licensed breeders, they too should be listed for public viewing. Although the Freedom of Information Act is an option to check for this same information, with the ease on online listing, tax payer money will be saved by eliminating employee time spent with these requests. The average person is not likely going to submit a FOIA request. An online listing of rescues and breeders provides Ohio citizens an extra level of protection from fraudulent rescues. The online listing can also provide breeder inspection reports that will give the consumer confidence in the quality of the puppy they are purchasing, often viewed as a valued family member.

Please see the following page for examples of rescue brokers that are practicing today in Ohio. We must protect well intentioned consumers from these fraudulent practices. This bill is a perfect opportunity to address this obvious oversight. Please include language that will address this issue.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this concern.

## Rescue Brokers Using Free Adoption Sites to Sell Puppies Purchased from Breeders to Unsuspecting Consumers



Andre is a 5 year old blue French Bulldog. **Adoption Donation is \$800**  
Location: Holmes, County Ohio  
Copied from their Adopt A Pet Website  
It all started with one family in Northern Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (yes, THAT Lancaster County). **We started reaching out to local Puppy breeders**, and they convinced quite a few of them that it's better to place their dogs into a loving home than to continue doing what they used to do with a dog they no longer wanted.

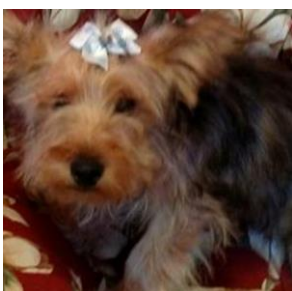


Most of our puppies come from the Amish farms in the area. Traditionally, Amish farmers do not believe in spaying or neutered their dogs because that process hampers the dog's ability to be a "working" animal or for religious reasons. As a result, famers often have "accidental" litters of puppies they do not wish to keep. Unfortunately, there are individuals who prey on this situation and buy the puppies they do not wish to keep. Unfortunately, there are individuals who prey on this situation and buy the puppies for dog fighting or other purposes. We try to intervene and obtain the puppies before they're sold into an abusive situation that the farmers are not aware of. Some farmers are not aware that there are other options to find the puppies homes instead of destroying them. That is why we place ads in their local papers to help guide them.

We **do not accept adult dogs and we do not accept cats** or kittens. However, we believe our objectives are the same as those of other good animal shelters: to find loving homes for unwanted animals

We do not support or agree with the puppy mills, we just want to prevent the puppies from ending up back in the breeding cycle. From time to time we will get a call from a breeder that had a litter and their "Buyer" did not pick up. **Breeders need at least \$72 dollars to break even on a puppy.**

Location: Tuscarawas County Ohio



Adoption Fee \$475.00  
Yorkie Poo Is a left over Christmas **puppy a breeder turned over**, because, now they have another litter. He is sweet, happy & playful. He is a little shy until he gets to know you.

**We specialize in puppy mill rescues**  
Location: Monroe County Ohio