

TALKING POINTS:

Retail Pet Sale Bans

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THE TRUTH ABOUT RETAIL PET SALE BANS:

- We all agree that bad breeders who mistreat and neglect animals need to be put out of business. But the activists who target pet stores with retail pet sale bans are misinformed—bans will not stop bad breeders.
- What bans will do is harm highly-regulated pet stores, eliminating the most transparent source of pets that provides purchasers with legal protections, and driving prospective pet owners to unregulated, unlicensed and potentially unscrupulous pet-sellers.

THE IMPACT OF BANS ON PET OWNERS:

- A ban will eliminate legal protections provided to families who adopt from pet stores; 22 states currently have pet purchase protection laws to protect consumers that have purchased animals from pet dealers.¹
- Pet sale bans could drive families to the unregulated market for puppy sales where there is zero oversight and no system in place to protect animal welfare, where they could be left with an unhealthy or diseased dog, huge veterinary costs, and no legal recourse.
- Families could also fall victim to fraud; the Better Business Bureau reports that fake online pet sellers and puppy scams have surged by 39 percent since 2017,² and 80 percent of sponsored online advertisements about pets may be fake.³
- California veterinarians saw an increase in consumers purchasing sick dogs from unregulated sources shortly after the state implemented a ban on the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits at pet stores in 2019.⁴

THE TRUTH ABOUT RETAIL PET STORES:

- Pet stores and the licensed breeders they work with are a highly-regulated, best-in-class source of pets that, in many states, are inspected regularly, provide veterinary exams, and keep detailed records of the condition and care of their animals.
- Pet stores are often the only place that families can turn to for peace-of-mind that they are bringing home a pet that was raised under federal and state care standards, has a detailed medical history, and in many cases, are protected by a consumer warranty.
- A pet sale ban will punish law-abiding pet stores, often small, local businesses that depend on establishing life-long relationships with pet owners to sustain their businesses because they can't compete with the product prices offered by online or big-box retailers. A ban will force many of these local businesses to close their doors permanently.

CALL-TO-ACTION:

Before passing new regulations or bans, lawmakers should spend energy and resources on evaluating, improving and increasing enforcement of federal and state animal care laws, and strengthening sourcing requirements governing breeders, to ensure that breeders are held to the same high standards of care.

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association. <https://www.avma.org/advocacy/state-local-issues/pet-purchase-protection-laws>

² BBB Alert: Beware of Puppy Scams This Holiday Season – Findings by BBB Reveal a Surge in Complaints and Scam Reports. (n.d.). <https://www.bbb.org/article/scams/18964-scam-alert-beware-of-puppy-scams-this-holiday-season>

³ Puppy Scams: How to Protect Yourself from Fake Online Pet Sellers. (2017, November). <https://www.bbb.org/article/scams/14213-puppy-scams-how-to-protect-yourself-from-fake-online-petsellers#:~:text=Experts>

⁴ ABC 10 San Diego <https://www.10news.com/news/team-10/puppy-dies-four-hours-after-sd-family-buys-it-vets-say-new-law-may-be-part-of-the-problem>