

**Help pass 2014 legislation that would phase out the sale of puppy mill dogs in Connecticut pet shops!**



**The single most effective way to help is to call your legislators**

– Making calls, emails, and in-person visits to your State Senator and State Representative is the most important action you can take. You are encouraged to contact them multiple times. Legislators are very motivated to support a bill when they hear from several residents in their district. You may have legislators who are generally “animal-friendly,” but do not assume this means they will support the pet shop bill – they need your backing and assurance. You must remind them of the value you place on ethical, humane businesses.

YOU voted them into office, lawmakers are therefore accountable to YOU and the humane legislation you’d like to see passed into law. To find out who represents you, go to <http://cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/CGAFindLeg.asp>. Calls and in-person appointments are best.

Politely ask your Representative and Senator to support humane pet shop legislation. This means to require pet shops to source their puppies and kittens only from rescues or shelters – not commercial breeders. (Local, responsible breeders will not be impacted; CT residents would still be able to purchase *directly* from a breeder.)

Here are some talking points:

- ***The pet shop supply chain is inherently inhumane.*** The commercial breeder regulations outlined in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) are woefully inadequate and essentially allow for federally-sanctioned cruel conditions. Further, even these minimal standards are poorly enforced by the USDA. There is very little chance of reforming the AWA at the federal level. Meanwhile, CT pet shops are full of dogs from USDA “certified” breeders, which are essentially puppy mills.
- ***There are approximately 130 pet shops in CT, and only 16 sell puppies.*** This means, 100+ pet stores have found a way to build a strong business without selling commercially-bred puppies – in fact, 50 stores have signed the HSUS’ “puppy friendly pledge”, meaning they pledge to NOT sell puppies. There is no reason to believe the 16 puppy stores cannot also build a humane business.
- ***Reputable breeders generally do not supply pet shops with their puppies.*** Just because a pet shop claims an animal comes from a “local home raised breeder” does not ensure that the dog is coming from ideal, non-puppy mill conditions. Adoption is always the best first option. But those who cannot find the dog they are looking for in shelters, are welcome to work directly with a breeder and verify conditions themselves.

**Other ways to help**

1. **Host an in-district meeting** – Constituent meetings are a great way to convey widespread support for an issue within a district. In these casual meetings, legislators are invited to meet with residents in their district as a group. Simply set up a place (someone’s home, or a room at the local library, for instance), schedule the time with the legislator, and ask them to support the humane pet shop bill. If interested, you may contact [humanepetshops@gmail.com](mailto:humanepetshops@gmail.com) for assistance.

2. **Recruit others** – Recruit other organizations or businesses to become members of the CT Alliance for Humane Pet Shops. Ask them to visit [humanepetshops.wordpress.com](http://humanepetshops.wordpress.com) to sign up. Also pass along information to your friends and neighbors.

3. **Join in the public dialog** – Write letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, and comments on news stories. There are tips on CVA’s Web site at <http://bit.ly/18BtAje>

5. **Sign up to receive email alerts** from CVA ([ctvotesforanimals.org](http://ctvotesforanimals.org)), the ASPCA (<http://www.asPCA.org/fight-cruelty/advocacy-center>), and the HSUS ([humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org)). This way, you will stay on top of the latest updates, and hear about opportunities to voice your concern at the Capitol.