



FACT SHEET

AB 485 (O'Donnell)
Pet Rescue and Adoption Act

SUMMARY

AB 485 requires pet store operators offering dogs, cats or rabbits for retail sale in California pet stores to only obtain these animals from an animal shelter or rescue group.

PROBLEM

"Puppy mills" or "kitten factories" are commercial breeding facilities that mass-produce animals for sale to the public, primarily through retail pet stores. Because pet stores are one step removed from the breeding of the animals they sell, store owners rarely know the breeding conditions of their animals. In many cases, puppy mills house animals in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions without adequate food, water, socialization or veterinary care. As a result, animals bred in these facilities often face an array of health problems, including communicable diseases, behavioral issues and genetic disorders.

The federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires breeders who sell puppies to pet stores to be licensed and inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). However, the standards that these breeders are required to meet by law are extremely minimal. For example, under the AWA, a cage is required to be only six inches larger than the animal it houses and cleaned just once a week. Furthermore, the USDA recently removed all breeder licensing and inspection data from their website. It is now impossible for retailers and consumers to access any information about the facilities they obtain their animals from, including histories of animal abuse.

In light of these inhumane conditions, 33 cities and counties in California have banned the retail sale of puppy mill dogs and cats in their local pet stores. Additionally, many pet stores have already worked to ensure their animals come from humane sources, demonstrating that it is possible to have a successful pet-related business without supporting puppy mills. Unfortunately, despite these tireless efforts, many pet stores throughout the state continue to obtain their dogs and cats from puppy mills.

SOLUTION

California taxpayers spend a quarter of a billion dollars annually to house and kill animals in local shelters while puppy mills throughout the country continue to mass breed animals for profit. AB 485 attempts to curtail these operations by supporting access to pet rescue and adoption in California retail pet stores. By offering puppies, kittens, and rabbits for adoption from nearby shelters, pet stores can save the lives of animals in search of a home, save the breeding animals trapped in puppy mills, and relieve pressure on county budgets and local tax payers.

SUPPORT

- Social Compassion in Legislation (Sponsor)
- Friends of Long Beach Animals
- Spay Neuter Action Project
- Pet Assistance Foundation
- Take Me Home Rescue

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