



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

## Senator Grisanti Continues Push For Stronger Animal Cruelty Laws With Bill To Crack Down On Puppy Mills

MARK GRISANTI April 24, 2013

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*Measure is a priority in Buffalo senator's sweeping bill package to protect animals as a part of the ASPCA's "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month" in April.*

(BUFFALO, NEW YORK) Senator Mark Grisanti (R,I-60) today renewed his call for New York State to finally get tough on puppy mills with his sponsorship of bill S.3753, which would allow forward-thinking local governments to regulate commercial pet breeders and pet

stores. The legislation addresses the ineffectiveness of New York's "Pet Dealer" law, the proliferation of unregulated dog breeders in the state and the pet industry's complicit support of inherently cruel, out-of-state puppy mills.

"New York State appears to be the only home-rule state in the country that explicitly prohibits its towns and cities from regulating commercial pet breeders and pet stores," Grisanti said. "Unchecked dog breeding is everywhere. Every week you read about yet another cruelty seizure with dozens of same-breed animals kept in deplorable conditions. Local governments from Western New York to Long Island have long sought the chance to get tough on these operations, and I was shocked to find the state deliberately prevents them from doing so."

Grisanti said that inadequate state resources make it impossible to detect unlicensed dog breeders who intentionally avoid regulation by quietly selling dogs online and through private sales, but also noted that even in licensed facilities conditions are often horrible, with dogs spending their entire lives in small enclosures with wire-floored cages that can legally be stacked on top of each other.

"The current law allows for overcrowding and problems with ventilation, light, and even the dripping of waste from upper cages into the crates below," Grisanti explained. "Dogs are basically crammed inside filthy structures where they never even feel a gust of fresh air, while others spend their entire lives outdoors, permanently exposed to the elements."

In addition, New York's pet stores - regulated under the same law that licenses commercial dog breeders - overwhelmingly support virtually unregulated, out-of-state puppy mills, often large Midwestern operations that somehow stay in business despite repeated USDA

violations. The large majority of puppies sold in New York pet stores come directly from out-of-state dealers who support massive breeding facilities that consistently put profit over responsible, humane animal care.

Bill Ketzer, senior state director of ASPCA Government Relations for the Northeast region, said, "The only ones who benefit from the current law are the pet dealers. Everyone else - the dogs, the consumers, the taxpayers, the shelters, the local government - is out of luck. Senator Grisanti's bill sends the simple, powerful message that if our cities and towns want to do better for their residents, their animals and their bottom line, it's time we let them."

Lorry Schick, President of NYS Citizens Against Puppy Mills, said, "Our many statewide members are so proud that Senator Grisanti is fighting the inherently cruel puppy mill and their dubious partners, the pet stores that sell their offspring. These mills are one of the worst offenses to man's best friend, where puppies are inbred, overbred, and sold at highly inflated prices - all of this unknown to the customer. Senator Grisanti's sponsorship of this law would give our communities the choice to regulate their own pet stores and hopefully move them all to a thriving, humane pet store model."

Barbara Carr, Executive Director of Erie County SPCA, said, "It is ultimately the local shelters that shoulder the cost of unregulated breeders and unwanted pet store animals through cruelty seizures, sheltering costs and legal proceedings. Local governments are better suited to regulate this industry if they choose, and Senator Grisanti acknowledges that with S.3753."

Brad Shear, President of the NYS Animal Protective Federation, said, "Because each community has different capabilities, they should be able to control their own exposure to the risks and costs that pet dealers bring to the community. Here we have strong legislation

to do exactly that, without any additional cost to the state. Most animal lovers would be stunned to see the conditions that are currently allowed."

Senator Grisanti has introduced and sponsored numerous bills to help protect animals who suffer senseless abuse at the hands of individuals who clearly have no regard for the safety and well being of animals. A longtime dog lover, the Senator is promoting S.3753 in addition to several other animal protection bills in recognition of April as "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month."

"As the owner of two dogs, I know all about the love and affection that animals can bring to people's lives," Senator Grisanti said. "No animal should ever have to suffer because of someone's neglect, recklessness or irresponsible behavior. I thank those who join me in advocating for this measure and look forward to working together as we aim toward making New York the best in the nation when it comes to fighting animal cruelty."