



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, State Senator Michael Gianaris Announce New Bill to Ban Animal Sales in NY Pet Stores

MICHAEL GIANARIS March 11, 2019

| ISSUE: **ANIMAL WELFARE, DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE, PUPPY MILLS, PETS, RETAIL STORES**



Albany, NY- Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF- Manhattan) and State Senator Michael Gianaris (D-Queens) today announced the introduction of legislation to prohibit the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in pet stores across New York State. The legislation would instead allow pet stores to make space available to shelters and rescues to display (feature) animals that are available for adoption.

“We must end the pet mill-to pet store pipeline,” said **Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF-Manhattan)**. “There is absolutely no reason that anyone should spend thousands of dollars on an often-unhealthy pet that was bred in abject horror when shelters and rescues statewide are bursting at the seams with healthy and innocent animals in need of “fur-ever” homes. Ending the demand for pet store animals will help to end the pet mill industry that supplies the stores.”

Here's a quote from the Senator: “With so many good animals in need of homes, there is no need for puppy mills to supply pet stores,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “Our four-legged companions should be treated with respect, not like commodities.”

The vast majority of animals available for sale in pet stores across the country come from dog, cat and bunny mills. The animals kept in the mills are subjected to horrific conditions. Many are locked in filthy cages that are too small to accommodate them. They do not have regular access to food or clean water, are denied routine medical care and are bred repeatedly turned into profit machines, forced to churn out litter after litter.

In addition to their torturous existence, the offspring from mill animals are often saddled with a host of congenital issues as a result of their poor breeding. These animals are the cute kittens, puppies and bunnies you find in the pet store. Unsuspecting consumers take these animals home and fall in love with them only to find that these animals are sick and in need of thousands of dollars in veterinary care.

Pet breeders and stores are regulated under the Animal Welfare Act by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). For years, advocates have pushed the USDA for a more robust inspection and enforcement regime. Instead, a recent investigation revealed that under the Trump administration, USDA inspectors documented an astounding 60% fewer violations at facilities that house animals in 2018 in comparison to 2017. In addition, the

USDA is issuing fewer serious violations that would ordinarily trigger swift follow-up action by the agency.

“For years the USDA was not doing its job, but now under Trump, whose family has a well-documented legacy of violence toward animals, the agency has seemingly abandoned altogether the animals it is required by federal law to protect. As with all else, it is vital that states like New York step up to take action to protect animals and unsuspecting consumers,” said **Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal**.

“Time after time, the pet industry has demonstrated that it is not interested in ensuring the welfare of the dogs it churns out, nor is it interested in transparency or public accountability,” said **Bill Ketzer, senior director of state legislation for the ASPCA, Northeast region**. “These badly-regulated commercial dog breeders have only one goal: breed the highest volume of puppies possible at the lowest cost for the retailer. In turn, pet stores do everything in their power to sell these dogs, conveniently excluding well-documented health and behavior risks in their pitch to buyers who believe they are going home with a healthy, well-bred puppy. We are grateful that Senator Gianaris and Assemblymember Rosenthal are moving the needle forward with this bill to protect pets and consumers.”

“We applaud Senator Gianaris and Assemblymember Rosenthal for introducing legislation aimed at shutting down New York’s puppy mill to pet store pipeline,” said **Brian Shapiro, New York state director for the Humane Society of the United States**. “As federal regulators fail to provide proper oversight of large-scale pet breeders, states must step in and pass effective laws that protect consumers and companion animals.”

“The public is disgusted by the reality of puppy mills and the predatory practices of the retailers it supports,” said **Libby Post, executive director of the New York State Animal Protection Federation**. “The Federation is pleased to support this measure, and work with our animal

welfare partners statewide to fight animal homelessness and help end the cycle of misery of mill-owned breeding dogs.”

New York State ranks at the top of the list of states with the most pet stores in the country, making it likely that our state, along with others, like California, which passed similar legislation in 2018, are nearly singlehandedly keeping the puppy mill industry in business.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S4234

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Prohibits the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits by retail pet shops; authorizes space for adoption

March 05, 2019

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Michael Gianaris**

Do you support this bill?