



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Announces Legislation Banning Animal Sales In Pet Stores Passes Domestic Animal Welfare Committee, Now Has 17 Senate Cosponsors

MICHAEL GIANARIS February 3, 2020

| ISSUE: **RETAIL PET STORES, PUPPY MILLS, S4234A, DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE, ANIMAL RIGHTS**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced his [legislation \(S.4234-A\)](#) to prohibit sales of dogs, cats, and rabbits in retail pet stores passed the Domestic Animal Welfare committee, the first procedural hurdle to the bill becoming a law. In addition, Senator Gianaris announced the legislation now has 17 Senate cosponsors.

“With so many good animals in need of rescue, there is no need for puppy mills that abuse animals to supply pet stores. Our four-legged companions should be treated with respect, not like commodities,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I am pleased this important legislation moved out of committee and continues to build momentum with many of my Senate colleagues.”

The co-sponsors now include Domestic Animal Welfare Committee Chair Senator Monica Martinez, Senator Todd Kaminsky, Senator John Brooks, Senator Joseph Addabbo, Senator Alessandra Biaggi, Senator David Carlucci, Senator Andrew Gounardes, Senator Brad Hoylman, Senator Robert Jackson, Senator Liz Krueger, Senator John Liu, Senator Jessica Ramos, Senator Julia Salazar, Senator Jose Serrano, Senator Toby Stavisky, Senator James Skoufis, and Senator Phil Boyle.

**Bill co-sponsor Senator Monica R. Martinez, Chair of the Committee on Domestic Animal Welfare** said, “There is absolutely no excuse for the abuse and mistreatment that occurs in puppy mills. These defenseless animals often develop behavioral and physical health conditions due to the poor living environment they are raised in. Puppy mills subject animals to cruelty, physical and psychological abuse. Animals are voiceless and we, as policymakers, are tasked with the responsibility to protect them. This legislation encourages the adoption of animals and encourages a stop to the profit making on the backs of these defenseless animals. We must be their best friend and rescue them as they rescue us; they provide us with unconditional love which no human can provide another.”

“The conditions at these puppy mill businesses are sickening and it creates an unsafe environment for pets and patrons,” said **bill co-sponsor Senator Todd Kaminsky**. “This bill will put an end to that horrible practice and make sure animals are kept safe and healthy.”

"I'm proud to co-sponsor this bill because it honors those special bonds humans form with our domestic animal companions. There are so many wonderful animals in need of adoption—we must say no to puppy mills that feed a consumerist approach to our fellow living creatures," said **bill co-sponsor Senator Robert Jackson**.

"The reality is, when you purchase a puppy, kitten and bunny from a pet store you are acting in support of puppy mills. There's simply no way around it," said **Assembly Member Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF-Manhattan)**, who carries the legislation in the Assembly. "Animals are sentient creatures, and we must do all that we can to end the torture that takes place in puppy mills and to find homes for the loving animals crowding shelters and rescues. This bill will achieve those goals, and I look forward to working with my colleagues and the advocates to see it become law. Having worked on animal issues for years now, I can say with certainty that cutting off the pet store to puppy mill pipeline is among the most urgent humane issues of our time."

The majority of animals available for sale in pet stores come from dog, cat and bunny mills. Offspring of mill animals often have congenital issues resulting from poor breeding and can cost families thousands of dollars in veterinary care.

Pet breeders and stores are loosely regulated under the Animal Welfare Act by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Recent investigations revealed, however, that under the Trump administration, USDA inspectors have been less aggressive in enforcing these regulations. In addition, the USDA is issuing fewer serious violations that would ordinarily trigger swift follow-up by the agency.

According to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the state agency tasked with regulating pet dealers, there are approximately 80 pet stores registered throughout the state.

Senator Gianaris is a leader on animal welfare issues in the Senate, passing the nation's first-ever statewide ban on cat declawing. Additionally, he leads the fight to prevent retail pet stores from selling animals from puppy mills and instead promote pet adoption.

“New York State, which has one of the country’s highest concentrations of pet stores, needs to end the sale of cruelly-bred puppy mill dogs in those shops,” said **Matt Bershadker, ASPCA President and CEO**. “Shutting down the puppy mill pipeline will make it much harder for unscrupulous breeders to profit from their unconscionable brutality, and we thank Senator Gianaris and Assembly Member Rosenthal for their leadership on this bill.”

“The Federation stands with Senator Gianaris and Senator Martinez to get this important bill passed. The state’s network of animal shelters stand at the ready to help pet stores bring adoption events to their shops in order to find good, loving families for the thousands of homeless animals we care for each year. Shutting down the Puppy Mill Pipeline in New York is not just the right action to take but the humane action needed to protect animals and New York’s citizens,” said **Libby Post, Executive Director, New York State Animal Protection Federation**.

“With this game-changing vote, the puppy mill industry has been put on notice that their time in New York is coming to an end,” said **Brian Shapiro, New York State Director for the Humane Society of the United States**. “This popular legislation has led to a groundswell of public support and we’re anticipating the bill’s eventual passage. The HSUS applauds Senator Gianaris for his dedication to protecting both animals and the interests of consumers.”

“We applaud the Senate for moving this bill, which is a win-win for animals and people. For

one, it promotes animal adoption and reduces the alarming rate of shelter animal euthanasia. At the same time, by eliminating a primary source of sales for puppy, kitten, and rabbit mills, it protects consumers and the environment,” said **Christopher Wlach, Chair, New York City Bar Association Animal Law Committee**

“I’m thrilled to see that Senator Gianaris’ puppy mill bill (S.4234-A) has passed through committee. This legislation is such an important step in preventing puppy mill cruelty from continuing and improving the lives of pets. Senator Gianaris continues to put animal rights at the forefront, and we are so lucky to have him in office pushing for better laws for our pets,” said **Loni Edwards, CEO and Founder, The Dog Agency.**

“Voters For Animal Rights strongly urges the New York legislature to pass this much-needed legislation to protect animals and consumers from businesses that put profits over compassion. This law will save thousands of dogs, cats, and rabbits from immeasurable suffering. We applaud Senator Gianaris for leading the pack to shut down the cruel puppy mill pipeline in New York,” said **Allie Feldman Taylor, President, Voters for Animal Rights.**

Photos of today’s news conference will be available [here](#).

Video of Senator Gianaris’ remarks is available [here](#).

---

#### RELATED LEGISLATION

---

### 2019-S4234A

- 
- 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
- 

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?