



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

Senator Biaggi and the Senate Majority Pass Legislation to Strengthen Animal Protections During National Pet Week

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI May 10, 2021

ALBANY, NY – Last week, Senator Biaggi and the Senate Democratic Majority advanced legislation in recognition of National Pet Week, to improve the health and safety of domestic animals, building on the conference's continued advocacy for animal welfare. This package establishes a ban on the sale of puppy mill animals, better defines the crime of aggravated cruelty to animals, enacts a property inspection requirement to check for abandoned animals, and ensures the best interest of pets is considered during divorce or separation. This legislation aims to curb animal abuse and mistreatment of animals throughout the state and encourage humane treatment.

State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:

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“As the guardian of two cats myself, I’m proud to join my colleagues in prioritizing the rights and well-being of all domestic animals. Banning puppy mill sales will encourage the adoption of animals across New York State and ensure no animal experiences abuse and neglect. I thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for her leadership in passing this package of bills.”

The legislation passed by the Senate Majority, includes:

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- **Puppy Mill Sales Ban:** This bill, S.1130, sponsored by Senator Micheal Gianaris and co-sponsored by Senator Biaggi, prohibits the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits by retail pet shops. Creating a barrier against the puppy mill supply chain and encouraging pet shops to partner with local animal shelters to showcase animals available for adoption.
- **Clarifies Aggravated Cruelty to Animals:** This bill, S.960, sponsored by Senator Liz Krueger, eliminates the word “serious” from the "serious physical injury" language of the crime of aggravated cruelty to animals, to ensure appropriate penalties when a person intends to cause extreme physical pain to an animal, even if the animal makes a full recovery.
- **Abandoned Animal Property Inspections:** This bill, S.4081A, sponsored by Senator Michele Hinchey, will require landlords of vacated properties to inspect the property for abandoned animals within three days if they knew or should have known that the property had been vacated.
- **Companion Animal Consideration:** This bill, S.4248, sponsored by Senator James Skoufis, will require the best interest of a companion animal to be considered when awarding possession in a divorce.

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