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THE SENATE
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Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
State Capitol – 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12224

July 17, 2013

Dear Governor Cuomo,

I write to you concerning bills A.740-A/S.3753-A, legislation that would allow for local regulation of certain sections of article 26-A of the agriculture and markets law which governs pet dealers, as long as the rule or regulation is not less stringent than state law.

The vast majority of animals sold at pet stores come from high-volume, wholesale breeders, commonly referred to as “puppy mills.” Inside puppy mills, dogs spend their entire lives in tiny, cramped, wire-floored cages that are stacked on top of each other – sometimes outdoors, with no protection from the elements.

These animals frequently suffer from serious and often life-threatening diseases, parasites and many congenital and hereditary conditions. Many unsuspecting consumers enter a pet store thinking that they are purchasing a dog from a reputable, even upscale breeder, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Instead, these consumers often learn after they bring their new pet home, that the animal suffers from a painful and expensive disease.

While the State Department of Agriculture and Markets regulates pet breeders and pet dealers selling at retail in this state, it falls to local shelters and SPCAs to care for pets that are abandoned by their owners when the cost of care exceeds resources or for animals that have been seized from unsanitary, dangerous and frequently unlicensed operations. In addition, neither the Department nor local governments currently have the ability to properly oversee the massive influx of sick and poorly-bred animals from wholesale sources supplying retail operations in New York. This legislation will not require any locality to take action; it will merely grant them the authority they seek to mitigate costs to municipal governments, local shelters and SPCAs and/or to protect consumers and animals.

I, along with Assemblywoman Linda B. Rosenthal (D-67) respectfully request that after careful consideration, you sign this legislation into law. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Grisanti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'M'.

Mark Grisanti