



FL STOP Talking Points

FL Puppy Mill Pipeline Bill | SB 1478 / HB 1033

Legislation has been filed for several years at the state level to prohibit the retail sale of dogs and cats throughout Florida to shut down the puppy mill pipeline that imports cruelly bred animals into the Sunshine state for resale to a handful of outlier pet stores who continue to sell dogs and cats despite the demonstrated risk to public health, consumer protection, and animal welfare.

The Puppy Mill Pipeline Bill will accomplish the following:

Protect Public Health

In recent years, hundreds of people have become sick — some seriously — after being infected with campylobacter bacteria linked to puppies sold at pet stores. The puppy mill pipeline that brings dogs from cruel facilities to warehouses and on to Florida stores makes it easy for diseases to be transmitted among young dogs. Because the puppies arrive at stores via a network of middlemen, it is difficult to track and trace outbreaks when they do occur. In recent years the CDC-documented a multi-state outbreak of campylobacter tied to puppy-selling stores, and **Florida had the second highest infection rate of any other state, after being ground zero for identifying the outbreak after Florida public health officials tied the campylobacter illness in humans to the sale of puppy mill dogs at a retail puppy-selling store in Central Florida.**

Protect Consumers

In 2022, the Florida Attorney General secured monetary relief for consumers who were reportedly deceived by a pet store that sold sick or dying puppies. A consumer protection investigation against a Florida Petland store revealed consumer complaints alleging the store misrepresented the health and quality of puppies, dishonored warranties, and violated state law. Following the AG's action, Petland paid more than \$200,000 and is permanently banned from certain documented deceptive practices. The Attorney General's complaint noted that while dogs carried canine parvovirus, bacterial pneumonia, and canine coronavirus, they were sold as "healthy" dogs. **The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services routinely receives similar consumer complaints related to sick puppies purchased from stores.**

Support Florida Businesses

Retail puppy sales line the pockets of out-of-state puppy mills, not local responsible breeders. Responsible breeders do not sell puppies to retail stores for resale. Pet stores that focus on supplies and services aren't only more humane, they are more profitable. Pet industry data reports that pet stores that focus on goods and services out earn pet stores that sell animals. **Pet businesses in Florida that do not sell dogs far outnumber pet stores that do, demonstrating that stores do not need to sell dogs to thrive.**

Reflect Floridians' Strong Support for Animal Welfare

Scores of communities in Florida have already passed laws to stop sales of dogs in stores, as have many cities across the country. Floridians don't need breeders to import cruelly bred dogs into our state: many better options exist — including working with local responsible breeders and rescue or adoption shelters.

Over 80 local governments in Florida have passed laws aimed at ending the retail sale of dogs in stores. It's time to pass the puppy mill pipeline and shut down the import of cruelly bred dogs into the Sunshine State.