



**PET INDUSTRY JOINT
ADVISORY COUNCIL**
1615 Duke Street, Suite 100
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**TESTIMONY TO THE MARYLAND SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN OPPOSITION TO SB625 FROM THE PET INDUSTRY
JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PIJAC) ON 16 MARCH 2020**

Position: Opposed

As an organization that routinely supports legislative efforts to advance the welfare of animals, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) appreciates the opportunity to share our views and expertise on Senate Bill 625 regarding the establishment of an animal abuse registry. PIJAC and our members across Maryland respectfully request that the House Judiciary Committee decline to take action on the bill.

We in the responsible pet industry don't just care about animals, we care for them on a daily basis. For many years PIJAC has provided a highly respected animal care certification program intended to ensure that employees are well trained in the care of the animals they sell; a program that is widely utilized not only by persons in the commercial pet trade but also shelters and humane societies throughout the country and one that has even been adopted as a statutory standard in some states. PIJAC has worked closely with the USDA on effective implementation of the Animal Welfare Act for pets since its inception almost fifty years ago, and has joined hands with state agencies to ensure adoption and enforcement of appropriate regulatory standards. Our association has long been recognized as the voice for a responsible and humane pet trade.

Senate Bill 625 would make it illegal for anyone to purchase a dog or cat from an out of state breeder unless they then traveled out of state to pick the animal up themselves. The safest, fastest and most humane way to transport a pet is often through the use of a professional transporter. These are people with purpose built vehicles and trained staff to handle live animal transportation. These transporters hold USDA Class B licenses, and are often also brokers as defined by this legislation.

The bill's sponsor is well aware of this, and has amended his bill banning the transportation of animals into the state in such a way as to appear more reasonable when, in fact, it is not. Maryland is already the most restrictive state in the country for pets, and the most difficult in which to find the pet of your choice.

Please reject Senate Bill 625.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Likins
Vice President of Government Affairs
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC)