



**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, INTERNET SALES OF  
DOMESTIC ANIMALS, FROM THE PET INDUSTRY JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PIJAC) ON 27 FEBRUARY 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 not only 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, but it would eliminate virtually every breeder in the state of Maryland. Just the act of having a website would likely be enough to run them afoul of this bill and taking a credit card or PayPal payment certainly would. If the intent of SB625 is to make pet ownership a privilege of the wealthy, then it certainly delivers.

Internet pet sales can certainly be a problem. There are numerous sellers who do not have the USDA license that they should, and it is estimated that up to half of the dogs for sale on the internet do not even exist. The solution to this is transparency and enforcement, not creating an environment where the responsible entities have been driven out of the market while leaving only the disreputable ones. Those unscrupulous organizations then further protect themselves from the intent of this bill by labeling themselves rescues and avoiding any scrutiny whatsoever.

Please reject Senate Bill 625.

Thank you for your consideration,

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