



**PET INDUSTRY JOINT
ADVISORY COUNCIL**
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**TESTIMONY TO THE MARYLAND HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE IN OPPOSITION TO SB103 FROM THE PET
INDUSTRY JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PIJAC)**

23 MARCH 2021

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 103 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.

Maryland SB103 would prohibit anyone in the state from selling any dog or cat at any location other than where the animal was bred. This will harm consumer choice and do nothing to stop inhumane breeding. In short, the only options for most consumers would be to choose between the limited options available at a rescue or shelter or travel out of state. They could not have the animal transported to the state by a USDA licensed transporter, nor could they arrange for a pet store to have the dog or cat delivered to a store where it could undergo the appropriate quarantine and health checks before making an appointment to meet it.

Even the limited number of local breeders would be required to have any prospective pet owner come to their home to purchase the companion animal. This requirement directly contradicts the health and social distancing guidelines in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and increases public health risk.

This bill would not only severely limit access to the pet of choice for Maryland consumers, but it also disproportionately impacts those without the means to travel to another state in search of the companion animal that would be the best fit for their individual situation.

Thank you for your consideration,

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