



January 21, 2020

RE: SENATE BILL 103 (SENATOR GRAMER)

POSITION: OPPOSE

Shelters, rescues, backyard breeders, online sales, and brick-and-mortar pet stores comprise the Maryland market.

Maryland only regulates our stores. Several agencies, including local animal controls, regulate us. When consumers come to us, they know we are an accountable, legitimate business that offers consumer protections. Neither shelters, rescues, nor the black market offer protections for consumers. Few online sales provide consumer protections.

How will your Bill benefit dogs? What will your Bill accomplish? Consumers will continue to find puppies, but your bill forces them to obtain dogs from black market breeders, non-profits, and scams instead of legitimate businesses. Instead of reducing substandard kennels, the Bill will increase the number of substandard kennels and backyard breeders. What is the logic of this Bill? **There are three bricks and mortar retail pet stores in Maryland that offer consumer protections and health guarantees. How does Senator Kramer's pet peeve against us solve his allegations that we spread sick animals? There are no facts to support the sponsor's arguments. There are no valid attorney general complaints against us either.**

After California outlawed brick-and-mortar pet stores, chaos erupted. Imports of diseased animals, black market scams, and backyard breeding increased. Consumer protections disappeared entirely in California.

If your Bill fails to protect the consumer or curb substandard, unregulated breeders, what are you accomplishing?

We advocate for clean, well operated, certified kennels and inspected stores that respect their animals. We believe the consumer should have protections.

Yours truly,

Mitchell Thomson
Owner/President
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