



# HUMANE SOCIETY

## LEGISLATIVE FUND™



## Support The Puppy Protection Act (H.R. 2840/S. 1385)

Introduced by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL); Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Charlie Crist (D-FL), Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA) & Jim McGovern (D-MA)

Tens of thousands of puppies and mother breeding dogs are suffering needlessly in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulated puppy mills. Puppy mills are commercial breeding facilities that mass-produce puppies for sale and USDA regulates those that sell to pet stores or sight-unseen over the internet. They commonly house the animals in overcrowded, and inhumane conditions. The breeding dogs at puppy mills are often forced to live their entire lives in small, stacked wire cages with little or no personal attention. As a result of inadequate veterinary care, the puppies from puppy mills are often sick when sold to pet stores or over the Internet.

### **AWA Standards are Outdated**

The USDA finalized a rule in May 2020 that would provide a few increased standards of care, including annual veterinary exams, vaccinations, and 24-hour access to fresh, clean water for all dogs. These are welcome improvements, but it is not enough to address the puppy mill conditions that currently exist. More needs to be done. Under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), the USDA regulates dog breeders, but the standards of care outlined under the AWA regulations are very outdated—in fact, decades old. These mere survival standards might keep dogs alive, but they are not humane. For example, the standards still allow dozens or even hundreds of dogs to be kept in small, stacked wire cages at a puppy mill, with only six inches of space above their heads and around their bodies.

### **Puppy Mills Are Bad for Puppies, and People**

The public does not approve of dogs living in atrocious breeding facilities when most of us treat our pets like family. It is time to upgrade the inadequate standards of care under the AWA to ensure that the animals being sold to the public as pets are indeed healthy and behaviourally sound. Addressing this problem will prevent harm to tens of thousands of animals as well as prevent great expense and heartache to an untold number of consumers.

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### **At a Glance**

The bill amends the AWA to:

- ◆ Ban harmful practices such as cage stacking and wire flooring.
- ◆ Require larger enclosures, including spacious outdoor exercise runs for all dogs over 12 weeks.
- ◆ Require that all dogs be fed at least twice a day.
- ◆ Require dogs to be protected from sweltering or frigid temperatures.
- ◆ Require that each animal receive prompt treatment of illness or an injury.
- ◆ Require that each dog receive daily socialization with humans and compatible dogs.
- ◆ Prohibit the overbreeding of dogs or the breeding of dogs that have serious health conditions or inheritable diseases that are likely to significantly affect the mother or offspring.
- ◆ Require group housing with other dogs, unless health or behavioral issues threaten safety.
- ◆ Require that breeders make every effort to find humane placement for retired breeding dogs rather than destroying them.



## Puppy Mills Are Bad for Consumers

*The PPA provides basic, common-sense standards of care that most Americans would expect professional breeders to already be providing.*

Too often, American families experience the heartbreaking news that the puppy they purchased from a pet store, who was supplied by USDA-licensed breeders that they expected to be held to high standards, is severely ill or has died. For example, a buyer purchased a Lhasa Apso puppy named Bella from a New Hampshire pet store for more than \$3,500 in February 2021. Just a few days after coming home, Bella started to vomit, and her new family was devastated to learn Bella had parvovirus. Soon, Bella had to be euthanized to end her suffering. Her buyer received a refund from the store for the cost of her puppy, but she still incurred \$2,500 in emergency veterinary bills trying to save Bella's life that were not reimbursed. Bella's owner was devastated at the loss of a puppy who never really had a chance to live. Deadly diseases like parvovirus spread quickly in kennels that don't have strict professional veterinary oversight.

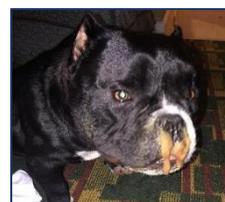
## Campylobacter—Deadly for Dogs, Dangerous for Humans

The Centers for Disease Control has studied two recent outbreaks of multi-drug-resistant Campylobacter infections in people in over a dozen states who handled or purchased pet store puppies. Many of the sick puppies were linked directly to USDA-licensed brokers and breeders. More than 150 people became ill and dozens were sick enough to be hospitalized. Unfortunately, the symptoms of Campylobacter are similar to many other illnesses. This is why prompt testing and diagnosis of sick dogs by a licensed veterinarian, which would be required under PPA, would prevent sick puppies from being sold and spreading their illnesses to humans.



*It's common for USDA-licensed puppy mills to keep animals in small wire cages like this that meet current legal requirements, yet are nevertheless inhumane.*

## Gigi's Story



An American bulldog named Gigi was purchased online from a breeder in California for \$18,000. Online sellers are required to be regulated by the USDA if they sell sight-unseen, and Gigi was shipped by air. Gigi arrived with labored breathing, patches of missing fur, and was malnourished. Gigi soon passed away from cardiopulmonary arrest stemming from pneumonia, pulmonary edema and mange, leaving her new family devastated both emotionally and financially.



## The Puppy Protection Act Will Level the Playing Field for Responsible Breeders

Approximately half of the USDA-licensed dog breeders already meet standards similar to the PPA requirements because they are in states that already require this level of animal care. Also, the vast majority of responsible breeders already meet the PPA standards because they are common-sense and reasonable measures. PPA would level the playing field by preventing substandard dealers in states with weaker laws and less accountability from undercutting quality breeders in the marketplace.

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