

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

03/24/2026 02:00 PM

HB26-1011 Transfers of Certain Pet Animals

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Delia Butler Against Pet Pantry	As a long time community member of the Widefield/Fountain area, having the family owned Pet Pantry Pet Store in our neighborhood is so nice. They have an amazing and knowledgeable staff that clearly care for their two and four legged patrons. The store carries such a wide variety of products along with bathing facilities for your pets. It is convenient, clean, and used by many residents. Their store has constant traffic and it meets the needs of all pet owners. The owners are responsible, friendly, and educated people who love animals. They are ethical people who work hard to give their patrons healthy pets that come from individuals or other breeders who put the animal first. The pet I purchased from them almost 14 years ago has been healthy and well taken care of because of their support and concern for his needs. Privately owned pet store owners like the ones who run The Pet Pantry deserve to be seen as a respectable and honorable choice to purchase a pet along with other items needed for our fur babies to live long and healthy lives. I stand by my testimony and plead with the Senate to not close their pet stores.
Kirsten Toy Against themselves	I would like to share why I oppose HB26-1011. As a wife of a small business owner, it is my strong belief that consumers have the right to choose businesses that align with their needs, interests and values. As a business owner, similar to those owners of pet stores, it is my responsibility to adhere to the guidelines established by the regulatory agencies and ensure my product meets said guidelines. It is then up to the consumer to do their research on whether or not my business, or the pet stores in this bill, meet their needs, interests and values and determine if they want to give me their business. This bill takes that choice away

	<p>from the consumer and ultimately hurts this one type of small business. This committee should respect that consumers have the authority to make decisions for themselves and/or their families in regards to pet purchases and if they choose to utilize pet stores for their purchase then that is their prerogative. To pass this bill would deny consumers that right and would reduce options for pet purchases. Government should be involved in regulating businesses not in determining whether they should exist. Thank you for your time.</p>
<p>Ray Coffey For themselves</p>	<p>Hello Committee Members,</p> <p>My name is Ray Coffey. I am a Colorado resident in support of HB26-1011.</p> <p>I have learned that dogs in commercial breeding facilities are often bred repeatedly and housed in cramped conditions. These practices can result in long-term health and behavioral problems for the puppies sold in stores.</p> <p>These facilities supply a retail system that represents less than 2% of the more than 100 billion dollar pet industry. Yet consumers can pay thousands of dollars for a pet store puppy that may need significant veterinary bills. As an example, in Florida alone, based on a study “The Cost of Deception: How Sick Pets Drain Florida’s Economy” commissioned by the Florida Attorney General, retail puppy sales were found to cost consumers more than 25 million dollars per year due to deceptive practices of and sick animals sold by pet stores.</p> <p>The financial toll on families who bring home a sick puppy is significant. The emotional toll is even more devastating.</p> <p>Colorado should not allow a system that profits from that suffering.</p> <p>Please vote yes on HB26-1011.</p>
<p>Kristi Skipper For themselves</p>	<p>I am Kristi Skipper, a breeder of Akitas. I strongly support this bill.</p> <p>This bill is urgently need for consumer protection.</p>

	<p>Consumers are not educated enough about what a responsible breeder does to ensure that they buy a puppy that has the best chance of a long and healthy life. Preservation breeders like me check out, then mentor their puppy buyers for the life of the dog. In addition, preservation breeders will always take back their dog if the home fails - regardless of the age or health condition of the dog. We are there to protect our puppies for their entire lives.</p> <p>Puppies bought through third parties, like retail pet stores, come from Commercial Breeders. There is no breeder to buyer connection. There is no lifetime support. There is no communication in both directions about the health of the dog. In short, a Commercial Breeder breeds a commodity. When sold to a broker or retail pet store, the breeder is finished with the puppy. The breeder got his money and is on to the business of multiple other breedings.</p> <p>We need to protect our unsuspecting consumers from this.</p> <p>Not only does this protect consumers, it protects preservation breeders, providing them with a full exemption so they can continue to breed sparing and selectively.</p> <p>There are only positive reasons for why this bill should become law in Colorado.</p> <p>I request that you support this bill and vote in favor of it.</p>
<p>Robert Young For Colorado Citizens For Canine Welfare</p>	<p>Hello Committee Members,</p> <p>My name is Pat Young and I live in Arvada, Colorado. I ask you to support HB26-1011.</p> <p>The retail puppy pipeline harms consumers financially. Families often pay thousands of dollars for a puppy and may face</p>

	<p>significant veterinary bills shortly after bringing the dog home. Some stores rely on high- interest financing or lease-to-own contracts that leave buyers in long-term debt. Since the puppy buyer is unfamiliar with the breeder, there is no one to consult if problems arise and there is no lifetime breeder support for the puppy.</p> <p>The Florida Attorney General's Office reported that retail puppy sales cost Floridians more than \$25 million annually due to sick pets and deceptive practices. We should not allow Colorado families to face similar harm.</p> <p>Pet stores can thrive without selling animals. Americans spent \$147 billion on pets in 2023, primarily on food, treats, grooming, training, and services, but not live animals.</p> <p>HB26-1011 protects consumers without hurting responsible businesses. Please vote in favor of this bill.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Pat Young, Vice President</p> <p>Colorado Citizens For Canine Welfare</p>
<p>Brent Johannes For Community Action for Animals</p>	<p>This Bill will help alleviate stress on Colorado shelters, which are under enormous strain.</p> <p>A recent Westword article published on Dec. 22, 2025 (titled: Denver Animal Shelter Saw a Record Number of Pets Surrendered in 2025) showed that the Denver Animal Shelter took in a record number of owner-surrendered pets in 2025, the highest level in nearly two decades. This surge reflects a system that produces more animals than communities can responsibly absorb.</p>

	<p>HB26-1011 is a common-sense step toward addressing that imbalance. By ending the retail sale of dogs and cats and curbing broker-based sales, the bill helps reduce the pipeline of animals bred for profit while shelters are already overwhelmed.</p> <p>At a time when shelters are struggling to keep up, Colorado should stop fueling overproduction and start prioritizing stability, adoption, and animal welfare. HB26-1011 does exactly that.</p>
<p>Teresa Kuhn Against themselves</p>	<p>I am providing testimony in favor of keeping pet city open and able to sell their puppies and kittens. I have found that they are a very reputable and follow stringent regulations in the care and the selling of their puppies and kittens. I am also speaking on behalf of the employees as I don't understand why we would even be entertaining closing a small business that employs a very unique set of people, including my son who is on the autism spectrum Dustin and the pet store have been very accommodating to my son and others, and providing a place of employment where they can flourish and have steady employment to make a good contribution to our community. They are very caring to all the pets at the pet store. They take very good care of them and make sure that they are healthy and strong before they are able to be purchased. Myself and other family members have purchased puppies from pet city and we were quite impressed with the care and what they provided for these puppies that we bought. Again</p> <p>I find it very sad with all that's going on in our state that we would prioritize closing a small business such as pet city that follows all their regulations that have been set forth for them to do in order to remain open for the safety of their pets I also find it very interesting that we have the choice to abort a baby up until birth but not having a choice where we get our puppies and kittens. Yet you're looking at closing a pet store that has very stringent regulations to sell puppies and kittens. I find that a little odd and so very sad. I as a mother and a customer would appeal to your common sense and keeping a small business open so that it and the employees may flourish and make a wonderful</p>

	<p>contribution to our community in Colorado Springs. Thank you, Teresa Kuhn</p>
<p>Adam Altschuh For himself</p>	<p>Ending the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores is a crucial step toward dismantling the puppy mill pipeline that often supplies retail shops with animals from inhumane, high-volume commercial breeding facilities. By forcing pet stores to partner with shelters and rescues, this ban prioritizes pet adoption over profit-driven breeding, helping to alleviate the overcrowding in local Colorado shelters. Furthermore, this legislation protects consumers from high veterinary costs often associated with buying sick or genetically compromised animals that are born into miserable conditions. Please support this legislation.</p>
<p>Jody Lyon Against himself</p>	<p>I think the selling of dogs and cats in stores should be allowed. By banning the sales backyard breeders are going to be everywhere. There will be no one keeping tabs on them making sure the animals are taken care of. No one to make sure they have veterinary care, shots, de-wormed, food and water. Also, I don't think anyone should be forced to adopt from a rescue. Potentially running the risk of behavior problems or health issues from fixing a puppy before they are of proper maturity. With the stores there are caring employees that makes sure the animals are cared for while they wait on their forever homes. Also, the stores allow people to actually see different breeds in one location, instead of meeting multiple people in different locations to find what you want.</p>
<p>Adelaide DesLauriers Against himself</p>	<p>There is no reason to stop sales of pets in pet stores as long as a reasonable price is set for pet care, veterinary care, and other usual and customary expenses, AND the pets are checked up on. By closing the stores, you are going to get backyard breeders and put animals in far more danger without checks and balances in place. Backyard breeders find ways to sell animals for FAR more. I know of a woman selling cats for \$2500!! Whereas the higher end cats at most of the stores are \$800-\$1000. Dogs can be even more! All breeders are for profit, but at least the storefronts have to be licensed, bonded, insured and meet safety inspections whereas your average joe at the Walmart parking lot or his house has no proper measures in place to ensure humane breeding, safety, health etc of the animals, nor are any price ceilings set.</p>

<p>Francisco Farias</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>It is a bad idea to ban pet stores from selling dogs and cats. The animals they provide have paperwork and come from reputable breeders. You shut them down and there will be more likely backyard breeders pushing their less legally regulated animals.</p>
<p>Jasmine Brandenburger</p> <p>For themselves</p>	<p>We MUST end the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores. Passing this bill will shut down the cruel cat and puppy mill industry pipeline. It will also encourage people to adopt from a shelter or rescue, giving more chances to the thousands of animals that desperately need homes.</p>
<p>Irelynn Parker</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>This bill will not stop the core issue of puppy mills, backyard breeders, or impulse buyers. All it will do is put people who work at affected petstores out of jobs and make it more difficult for responsible breeders to find homes for their animals.</p>
<p>Percy Mayo</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>This is a prejudice driven attack fueled by biased hear say testimony that is designed to prevent puppy mills but the misguided efforts will destroy a valuable resource that provides more than an animal it provides resources that a breeder cannot. On behalf of Mr. Hayworth and his sincere efforts to place the perfect puppy in our home, provide expert advice on her care and provided the direction for her training, I implore the committee to research deeper to discern the true problem of animal abuses by unlicensed uncaring puppy mills, do not destroy the small family businesses that help and give families the choice of what pet they desire.</p>
<p>Beth Neal</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>Dear Senators,</p> <p>My name is Beth Neal and I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB26-1011 which would ban the retail sale of puppies and kittens in Colorado. Pet City has been serving the city of Colorado Springs faithfully for over 50 years and continues to maintain solid reputations and records with all state licensing boards. They continue to work closely with breeders and veterinarians to ensure the best care for their animals. These businesses offer our community a service and relationship that is not found anywhere else. This proposed bill is extreme and</p>

	<p>unjustified. It is a false assumption that pet stores and puppy mills are directly equal.Â Â</p> <p>I am completely against this pet store ban. I have known the owner of Pet City, Dustin Haworth, for 35 years and the things the people behind this bill are accusing him of are simply not true. Dustin is the most genuine, caring man and loves all animals with all his heart. He treasures his own pets and would drop everything to come help anyone with theirs. He has wonderful relationships with honorable breeders and veterinarians. We have 4 dogs from Dustinâ€™s store. Our little Maltese is almost 17. He has lead an unbelievably long and healthy life and shows no signs of stopping.Â His name is Petey!Â Â We also have Klark, a cairn terrier, who is 8 and loves to play fetch until lâ€™m tired.Â</p> <p>And finally we have our Covid babies Walter and Butterz. They are strong healthy Golden Retrievers that have brightened every day of this crazy time.Â</p> <p>Please voteÂ NOÂ on this bill. It will take away a loving service to our community and the livelihood of a good, honest, & hard working family.Â</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Beth Neal.Â</p> <p>719-290-6478</p> <p>bethneal1030@gmail.com</p>
<p>Margaret Vaccarella For themselves</p>	<p>I strongly support ending the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores. Every year, pet store puppies and kittens come from puppy and kitten mills that prioritize profit over animal welfare, often with poor living conditions and little oversight. By prohibiting retail sales and redirecting efforts toward reputable, humane sources and adoption options, HB26-1011 protects animals from exploitation and reduces demand for cruel breeding practices.</p>

	Colorado families deserve pets sourced with care, transparency, and compassion.
--	---

2024 Colorado Import Audit

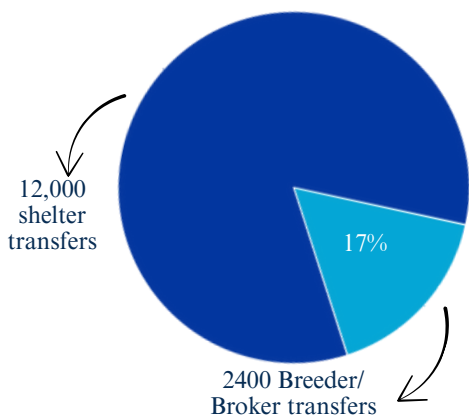
performed by Bailing Out Benji

Due to the conversation surrounding sunseting PACFA, Bailing Out Benji was asked to perform an audit of all incoming dogs and puppies to show the state of Colorado the scope of the issues that they will be discussing. Our methodology included receiving all incoming Certificates of Veterinary Inspection from the state of Colorado for the year 2024, which are documents that are required when animals cross state lines. We went through each import record to determine where the animals originated from and where they were going in order to put this report together for the department and any interested lawmakers.

Bailing Out Benji's research team audited more than 10,000 CVI records to determine the following information.

**Please note that each record may have more than one animal listed as being transferred.*

Rescue and Shelter Imports



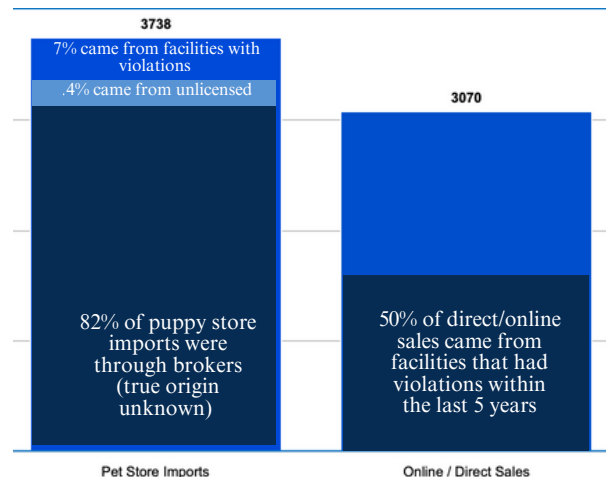
After auditing the origins of more than 14,400 dogs and puppies entering the state of Colorado and going to sheltering organizations in 2024, we have determined that **17% of canines being imported are coming from dog breeding or brokering facilities.** The majority of the breeder imports are coming to rescue organizations and not government-funded shelters. Several PACFA-licensed rescues appear to only import dogs from brokering facilities or breeders. Further breakdown of the breeder to rescue data shows that 50% of imports were from unlicensed breeders, 44% of imports were from licensed breeders, 4% of imports were from licensed brokers, and 2% were from dog auctions. We were able to determine that 13% of the dogs/puppies imported from breeders and brokers had violations, and 24% were imported without identifying breeder information.

Breeder to Breeder/Broker Imports

In 2024 at least 480 dogs or puppies that were imported into the state of Colorado were going to destinations that appeared to be breeding or brokering facilities. We were able to determine that **98% of the animals were either going to or leaving facilities that we believe hold improper or no licensing.** This portion of the audit has triggered complaints on 13 facilities both inside and outside of Colorado.

Pet Store Imports

After auditing 3,738 puppy imports into retail stores in Colorado, it was determined that 82% of the puppies are coming from USDA-licensed brokers, with their true origin unknown. Meanwhile, 7% of the puppies came from facilities with violations, and .4% came from unlicensed operations.



Direct/Online Sales

After auditing the direct or personal sales, it was determined that 58% of the imports came from states that require no licensing for dog breeders, while 14% were listed as coming from a transport company with violations and without the origin known. Of the states that required licensing, we have found that 50% of the puppies came from places that had violations and 8% are coming through brokers. This portion of the audit triggered complaints on 14 facilities both inside and outside of Colorado.



WOUNDED PAW PROJECT ©

“BE THE VOICE, FOR THE VOICELESS” ©

Chairperson Wallace and Members of the Senate Military & Veterans Affairs Committee,

My name is Ernesto “E” Hernandez, Co-Founder of Wounded Paw Project © (WPP) and a Purple Heart recipient. I submit this testimony in opposition to the proposed pet sale ban currently before your Committee in the State of Colorado.

This work is personal. WPP was founded by my dog, Daisy—a pitbull-turned-service dog who saved me from myself, from both the visible and invisible wounds of combat.

Wounded Paw Project © is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating, and placing abused and neglected dogs—many from high-risk situations—with veterans and others in need of companionship and emotional support. This work is not abstract. I have lived it. The right dog can stabilize a veteran, provide structure, and in some cases, save a life. The wrong match can do the opposite.

That is why access matters.

Not one breed fits all.

Not one source fits all.

And not every dog ends up in a shelter.

While I do not support irresponsible breeding, especially backyard breeders who operate without standards or accountability, I do recognize that responsible breeding and reputable, regulated retail environments have a place in ensuring accountability, transparency, and proper matching. I also want to be clear that many rescue dogs possess the temperament, intelligence, and working capability needed to support veterans. The issue is not the source—it is the standards behind it.

In the State of Colorado, veterans’ needs are not one-size-fits-all. The bond between a veteran and a dog is not just meaningful; it is often essential to stability, routine, and overall well-being. What matters most is not where a dog comes from, but whether the placement is appropriate and sustainable.

This is not about preference. It is about fit.

When access is limited to one pathway, the likelihood of making the right match decreases. For veterans navigating trauma, that match is not optional—it is often part of their ability to function day to day.

Additionally, reducing access to regulated, transparent sources may unintentionally push individuals toward less-regulated channels, where fewer safeguards exist for both animals and consumers. That outcome does not serve animal welfare, nor does it serve the veterans your committee is charged with supporting in Colorado.

I would be remiss if I did not also highlight a related issue impacting the military community. Breed-Specific Legislation on military installations continues to separate families from their dogs based solely on appearance. These policies disrupt stability, damage morale, and place additional strain on already overcrowded shelters. For service members and their families, this is not a theoretical issue—it is a real and ongoing hardship that deserves attention.

At Wounded Paw Project ©, we believe in accountability, responsibility, and doing what is right for both animals and humans. That includes recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work.

I respectfully ask the Committee to consider the practical impact of this legislation on Colorado veterans and to preserve access to responsible, diverse pathways for obtaining companion animals.

Respectfully submitted,



Ernesto “E” Hernandez III
Co-Founder, Purple Heart Recipient,
Wounded Paw Project ©
“Be The Voice For The Voiceless®”



Daisy “Rainbow” Hernandez
Founder, Pitbull-Turned-Service-Dog
In Memoriam
2007 - 2025



WOUNDED PAW PROJECT ©

“BE THE VOICE, FOR THE VOICELESS” ©

Chairperson Wallace and Members of the Senate Military & Veterans Affairs Committee,

My name is Ernesto “E” Hernandez, Co-Founder of Wounded Paw Project © (WPP) and a Purple Heart recipient. I submit this testimony in opposition to the proposed pet sale ban currently before your Committee in the State of Colorado.

This work is personal. WPP was founded by my dog, Daisy—a pitbull-turned-service dog who saved me from myself, from both the visible and invisible wounds of combat.

Wounded Paw Project © is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating, and placing abused and neglected dogs—many from high-risk situations—with veterans and others in need of companionship and emotional support. This work is not abstract. I have lived it. The right dog can stabilize a veteran, provide structure, and in some cases, save a life. The wrong match can do the opposite.

That is why access matters.

Not one breed fits all.

Not one source fits all.

And not every dog ends up in a shelter.

While I do not support irresponsible breeding, especially backyard breeders who operate without standards or accountability, I do recognize that responsible breeding and reputable, regulated retail environments have a place in ensuring accountability, transparency, and proper matching. I also want to be clear that many rescue dogs possess the temperament, intelligence, and working capability needed to support veterans. The issue is not the source—it is the standards behind it.

In the State of Colorado, veterans’ needs are not one-size-fits-all. The bond between a veteran and a dog is not just meaningful; it is often essential to stability, routine, and overall well-being. What matters most is not where a dog comes from, but whether the placement is appropriate and sustainable.

This is not about preference. It is about fit.

When access is limited to one pathway, the likelihood of making the right match decreases. For veterans navigating trauma, that match is not optional—it is often part of their ability to function day to day.

Additionally, reducing access to regulated, transparent sources may unintentionally push individuals toward less-regulated channels, where fewer safeguards exist for both animals and consumers. That outcome does not serve animal welfare, nor does it serve the veterans your committee is charged with supporting in Colorado.

I would be remiss if I did not also highlight a related issue impacting the military community. Breed-Specific Legislation on military installations continues to separate families from their dogs based solely on appearance. These policies disrupt stability, damage morale, and place additional strain on already overcrowded shelters. For service members and their families, this is not a theoretical issue—it is a real and ongoing hardship that deserves attention.

At Wounded Paw Project ©, we believe in accountability, responsibility, and doing what is right for both animals and humans. That includes recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work.

I respectfully ask the Committee to consider the practical impact of this legislation on Colorado veterans and to preserve access to responsible, diverse pathways for obtaining companion animals.

Respectfully submitted,



Ernesto “E” Hernandez III
Co-Founder, Purple Heart Recipient,
Wounded Paw Project ©
“Be The Voice For The Voiceless®”



Daisy “Rainbow” Hernandez
Founder, Pitbull-Turned-Service-Dog
In Memoriam
2007 - 2025



March 24, 2026

RE: HB26-1011 – Ban on the Sale of Cats, Dogs and Rabbits

Dear Chairperson Wallace and members of the Senate State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee,

As the advocacy voice of the responsible pet care community, the Pet Advocacy Network represents the interests and expertise of retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, pet owners, and others involved in the many aspects of pet care across the United States. Our association promotes animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, fosters environmental stewardship, and ensures healthy pets' availability through our local, state, and federal work. In addition, we routinely advocate for legislative and regulatory proposals to protect the health, safety, and availability of companion animals.

On behalf of the responsible pet care community, we ask that you **vote NO on House Bill 26-1011**, an act that would ban the sale of dogs and cats in licensed and regulated retail pet stores.

If the goal of this bill is to improve animal welfare, we should ask whether eliminating regulated pet stores actually accomplishes that goal. The available evidence suggests that it does not. Animal welfare outcomes are driven by the quality of care, management, oversight, and enforcement — not simply by banning one lawful and regulated sales channel.

Pet stores are subject to stringent regulations, including regular inspections, licensing requirements, and adherence to animal welfare standards. These regulations ensure that the animals are healthy, well-cared for, and sold with a guarantee that protects the consumer.

Pet stores also provide valuable consumer education on pet care, ensuring that new pet owners are well-informed and prepared to take on the responsibilities of pet ownership. This consumer protection exists only for animals that come from regulated pet stores — giving families documented sourcing information, required health disclosures, veterinary records, and a licensed entity accountable to the Colorado Department of Agriculture if problems arise.

By contrast, animals obtained through shelters and rescues - who play an important and critical role - can and do become ill, often contract contagious diseases while housed in congregate environments, and sometimes have congenital disorders that are discovered only after adoption — yet those placements lack the same standardized retail disclosures and enforceable post-purchase protections.

CBS News investigations have highlighted serious regulatory concerns within portions of the rescue system, including the large-scale importation of puppies into Colorado, include over 37,000 alone in 2021 and links between interstate importing and disease outbreaks such as distemper and even a rabies exposure case that required widespread public health intervention.¹

¹ www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/colorado-pet-rescues-millions-dollars-trafficking-puppies-investigation-millions/

Research on commercial breeding and animal welfare has shown that retail pet sale bans may actually create new welfare problems while exacerbating existing ones. Rather than stopping bad actors, these policies primarily displace licensed and inspected breeders, while allowing unregulated backyard breeders, online sellers, and true puppy mills to fill the void.

Notably, PACFA Program Section Chief Nick Fisher has emphasized that regulators receive complaints “every week” about sick dogs that were adopted, underscoring that these issues are not isolated. He has also warned about the risks associated with insufficient health documentation and the challenges regulators face when animals are transported across state lines without consistent traceability and oversight. Fisher’s comments make clear that disease risk and post-adoption illness are recurring enforcement realities — not hypothetical concerns.

The contrast is clear: licensed pet stores operating under Colorado’s Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act (PACFA) are among the most highly regulated in the state and are subject to mandatory licensure, routine inspections, documented sourcing requirements, sanitation and housing standards, veterinary care protocols, and clear consumer disclosure laws. Rescues and shelters, while serving an important role in rehoming animals, are often held to a different and in some respects lower regulatory standard — particularly regarding transaction transparency, traceability, and consistent enforcement oversight. Colorado pet stores are therefore among the most highly regulated sources for pets in the state.

When you eliminate a transparent, inspectable point of sale, demand does not disappear — it shifts. That means more consumers are pushed into less transparent channels, including online sales and underground markets where animal origin, health history, and care conditions are often unknown. That is not a path to improved animal welfare.

In California, which has a statewide ban, the unregulated, underground puppy market has now thrived. A 2024 investigation by The Los Angeles Times revealed that thousands of these puppies, often purchased online, at rest stops or from those claiming to be local “hobby breeders”, come from breeders that the well-regulated pet stores do not, and cannot work with. These puppies are coming from breeders with animal welfare violations including severe neglect, overcrowding, and poor veterinary care. In one instance, puppies infected with parvovirus were knowingly transported without treatment, endangering both the puppies and their eventual owners.

Veterinarians in California, citing the statewide ban, saw increase in consumers purchasing sick dogs from unregulated sources shortly after the state banned the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits at pet stores, and without the consumer protection that came with purchasing a pet from a regulated pet store, families were left paying enormous veterinary bills, and in some cases, families never received the dog they paid for.²

Colorado already has a strong, structured regulatory system governing pet stores — one that provides far greater transparency, consumer protection, and enforceable welfare standards than most other sources of

² Puppy dies four hours after SD family buys it, Vets say new law may be part of the problem, <https://www.10news.com/news/team-10/puppy-dies-four-hours-after-sd-family-buys-it-vets-say-new-law-may-be-part-of-the-problem>



companion animals. Under the Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act (PACFA), pet stores must be licensed, inspected, meet detailed care and housing standards, maintain accurate records of animal sourcing and health, provide required disclosures to buyers, and are accountable to the Colorado Department of Agriculture if they fail to meet those standards.

Another unintended consequence of pet sale bans is the emergence of so-called “retail rescue” operations, something that unfortunately already exists in Colorado, where animals may be sourced through auctions or high-volume channels and then presented as rescues. There is also evidence of breeders misrepresenting themselves as rescues to circumvent these laws. These dynamics erode public trust, reduce transparency, and increase the risk that poor welfare conditions go undetected.

In Colorado many shelters and rescues already operate with *less consistent oversight*, particularly around animal origin traceability and health testing — a gap that has had real consequences. For example, Colorado regulators have reported cases of dogs imported by some rescues being infected with rabies — a disease believed eradicated in the U.S. — resulting in dozens of people needing post-exposure treatment and multiple dogs being euthanized. PACFA’s enforcement chief, Nick Fisher, has noted that he *receives complaints every week about sick dogs that were adopted* from facilities that are not subject to the same level of regulatory scrutiny, and that disease exposures and reporting gaps are not unusual.³

Colorado state law has been strong in ensuring that these substandard breeders cannot work with anyone in the state, however, as we have seen in other states and localities where these bans have been imposed, bad breeders and illegal backyard breeders end up thriving

Enforcement—not prohibition—is the appropriate policy solution. If the concern is bad actors, Colorado law already provides strong tools for inspections, penalties, license revocation, and authority to seize animals when welfare is at risk. House Bill 26-1011 does not strengthen these tools. It does not add inspectors, raise care standards, or improve oversight. Instead, it removes regulated pet stores from the system while leaving unregulated and difficult-to-police channels untouched.

There are better solutions available. Rather than banning regulated stores, policymakers should focus on strengthening and harmonizing standards across all animal sources, increasing traceability and accountability, and encouraging higher welfare practices through education, engagement, and science-based standards. Collaborative approaches that raise care standards and improve compliance are more likely to produce meaningful welfare gains than a ban that simply shifts the market out of view.

Rather than imposing a ban that would eliminate regulated pet stores and push consumers toward less transparent and less protected channels, Colorado should use the PACFA sunset review as an opportunity to strengthen regulation across all animal sources — including shelters and rescues — to enhance health safeguards, traceability, and accountability. A thoughtful regulatory update would improve animal welfare and consumer protection without depriving families of the protections that well-regulated pet stores provide, and without inadvertently creating greater risks by driving demand into poorly regulated markets.

³ <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/colorado-regulators-worried-imported-dogs-infected-disease-rabies-pet-adoption-eradicated/>



House Bill 26-1011 is not only unnecessary—it is counterproductive. Colorado already has a strong, enforceable regulatory framework that governs pet stores and breeders alike. Shutting down licensed, inspected pet stores will not stop bad breeders; it will weaken oversight, reduce transparency, and harm both animals and consumers. We respectfully urge the Committee to vote NO on House Bill 26-1011 and instead work collaboratively to build on Colorado’s existing animal welfare protections.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alyssa Miller-Hurley
Vice President of Government Affairs

1615 Duke Street, Suite 100
Alexandria, VA 22314
202.452.1525 | info@petadvocacy.org
Petadvocacy.org





AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

March 23, 2026

Re: HB 26-1011 Undermines Pet Choice, Consumer Protection, and Responsible Breeders

Dear Members of the State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) writes today on behalf of our 110 AKC local and breed dog clubs in Colorado comprised of thousands of responsible Colorado dog owners and breeders to respectfully ask you to not advance House Bill 26-1011. This bill would have a detrimental impact on the many responsible dog owners, breeders, and future dog owners in the state.

The AKC shares your concerns about the well-being of all pets. We are the world's largest purebred dog registry, our affiliated clubs operate America's largest purebred rescue network, and for more than 140 years we have been proud to be the only non-profit purebred registry devoted to the health and well-being of all dogs. ***Our commitment to the well-being of all dogs is the reason we are concerned with the implications of House Bill 26-1011.***

Our concerns include the following:


- **Limiting pet choice harms Colorado residents** – HB 26-1011 reduces the average person's access and ability to choose a pet with the predictable type and substantiated health background that meets their family's needs. Individuals who lack the resources or do not have access to private hobby breeders will be the most directly impacted.
- **Pet stores are a viable option for a consumer to purchase a pet** – Responsible pet shops carefully source their animals and are subject to strict requirements and licensure by the Colorado Pet Animal and Facilities Act (PACFA) and federal regulations. Residents who do not have access to a local breeder of the breed of their choice should be able to purchase a dog from a regulated, licensed pet store where they can obtain the benefits of a pet that has been raised humanely and is covered by consumer protection laws, has an available health history, and ongoing professional relationships for advice during the life of the pet. ***HB 26-1011 would limit freedom of choice and the ability of residents to select pets in a responsible manner, based on the breed, health and temperament traits that they seek and make a good match for their lifestyle. When people cannot obtain a pet that is the right fit for their lifestyle, that pet is more likely to end up in a shelter.***
- **HB 26-1011 will not help animals** - This bill makes the assumption that all dogs sold at pet stores have been raised in poor conditions, which is simply not accurate. Instead, it significantly restricts one of the most regulated and vetted sources of pets from the market. ***This bill will exacerbate the problem of substandard breeders and/or irresponsible pet sellers. When a similar ban was enacted in California, the state experienced significant increase in cases of fraud and the sale of sick puppies as residents have no choice but to go to the Internet in search of the right pet for their family.***
- **Limiting transfers of three pet animals per year needs clarification** – If a person transfers more than 3 dogs per year that they did not personally breed, there is some concern they would be considered a broker who would now be unable to do these transfers without breaking the law, even if no money is exchanged. We respectfully ask that this be clarified to ensure the law will not stop situations such as if an individual with more than three dogs have an emergency and their pets need to be transferred to another loving situation.

A better solution is stronger enforcement of current laws and regulations, strong consumer protection laws, and further regulation of shelters, rescues, importers and transporters to ensure those dogs receive the same level of humane care and oversight as this bill is seeking and is already provided by responsible breeders and pet shops.

The AKC and the Colorado Federation of Dog Clubs would welcome the opportunity to work with you and local communities to address your concerns without punishing responsible Colorado pet store owners, breeders, and dog owners. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 919-816-3720 or jennifer.clark@akc.org if we may be of assistance in any way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Clark
Director, Legislative Outreach

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

03/24/2026

HB26-1011 Transfers of Certain Pet Animals

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Adam Altschuh For himself	Ending the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores is a crucial step toward dismantling the puppy mill pipeline that often supplies retail shops with animals from inhumane, high-volume commercial breeding facilities. By forcing pet stores to partner with shelters and rescues, this ban prioritizes pet adoption over profit-driven breeding, helping to alleviate the overcrowding in local Colorado shelters. Furthermore, this legislation protects consumers from high veterinary costs often associated with buying sick or genetically compromised animals that are born into miserable conditions. Please support this legislation.
Adelaide DesLauriers Against himself	There is no reason to stop sales of pets in pet stores as long as a reasonable price is set for pet care, veterinary care, and other usual and customary expenses, AND the pets are checked up on. By closing the stores, you are going to get backyard breeders and put animals in far more danger without checks and balances in place. Backyard breeders find ways to sell animals for FAR more. I know of a woman selling cats for \$2500!! Whereas the higher end cats at most of the stores are \$800-\$1000. Dogs can be even more! All breeders are for profit, but at least the storefronts have to be licensed, bonded, insured and meet safety inspections whereas your average joe at the Walmart parking lot or his house has no proper measures in place to ensure humane breeding, safety, health etc of the animals, nor are any price ceilings set.
Beth Neal Against himself	Dear Senators, My name is Beth Neal and I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB26-1011 which would ban the retail sale of puppies and kittens in Colorado. Pet City has been serving the city of Colorado Springs faithfully for over 50 years and continues to maintain solid reputations and records with all state licensing boards. They continue to work closely with breeders and veterinarians to ensure the best care for their animals. These businesses offer our community a service and relationship that is not found anywhere else. This proposed bill is extreme and unjustified. It is a false assumption that pet stores and puppy mills are directly equal.

	<p>I am completely against this pet store ban. I have known the owner of Pet City, Dustin Haworth, for 35 years and the things the people behind this bill are accusing him of are simply not true. Dustin is the most genuine, caring man and loves all animals with all his heart. He treasures his own pets and would drop everything to come help anyone with theirs. He has wonderful relationships with honorable breeders and veterinarians. We have 4 dogs from Dustin’s store. Our little Maltese is almost 17. He has lead an unbelievably long and healthy life and shows no signs of stopping. His name is Petey! We also have Klark, a cairn terrier, who is 8 and loves to play fetch until I’m tired.</p> <p>And finally we have our Covid babies Walter and Butterz. They are strong healthy Golden Retrievers that have brightened every day of this crazy time.</p> <p>Please vote NO on this bill. It will take away a loving service to our community and the livelihood of a good, honest, & hard working family.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Beth Neal 719-290-6478 bethneal1030@gmail.com</p>
<p>Brent Johannes For Community Action for Animals</p>	<p>This Bill will help alleviate stress on Colorado shelters, which are under enormous strain.</p> <p>A recent Westword article published on Dec. 22, 2025 (titled: Denver Animal Shelter Saw a Record Number of Pets Surrendered in 2025) showed that the Denver Animal Shelter took in a record number of owner-surrendered pets in 2025, the highest level in nearly two decades. This surge reflects a system that produces more animals than communities can responsibly absorb.</p> <p>HB26-1011 is a common-sense step toward addressing that imbalance. By ending the retail sale of dogs and cats and curbing broker-based sales, the bill helps reduce the pipeline of animals bred for profit while shelters are already overwhelmed.</p>

	At a time when shelters are struggling to keep up, Colorado should stop fueling overproduction and start prioritizing stability, adoption, and animal welfare. HB26-1011 does exactly that.
Delia Butler Against Pet Pantry	As a long time community member of the Widefield/Fountain area, having the family owned Pet Pantry Pet Store in our neighborhood is so nice. They have an amazing and knowledgeable staff that clearly care for their two and four legged patrons. The store carries such a wide variety of products along with bathing facilities for your pets. It is convenient, clean, and used by many residents. Their store has constant traffic and it meets the needs of all pet owners. The owners are responsible, friendly, and educated people who love animals. They are ethical people who work hard to give their patrons healthy pets that come from individuals or other breeders who put the animal first. The pet I purchased from them almost 14 years ago has been healthy and well taken care of because of their support and concern for his needs. Privately owned pet store owners like the ones who run The Pet Pantry deserve to be seen as a respectable and honorable choice to purchase a pet along with other items needed for our fur babies to live long and healthy lives. I stand by my testimony and plead with the Senate to not close their pet stores.
Francisco Farias Against themselves	It is a bad idea to ban pet stores from selling dogs and cats. The animals they provide have paperwork and come from reputable breeders. You shut them down and there will be more likely backyard breeders pushing their less legally regulated animals.
Irelynn Parker Against themselves	This bill will not stop the core issue of puppy mills, backyard breeders, or impulse buyers. All it will do is put people who work at affected petstores out of jobs and make it more difficult for responsible breeders to find homes for their animals.
Jasmine Brandenburger For themselves	We MUST end the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores. Passing this bill will shut down the cruel cat and puppy mill industry pipeline. It will also encourage people to adopt from a shelter or rescue, giving more chances to the thousands of animals that desperately need homes.
Jody Lyon Against themselves	I think the selling of dogs and cats in stores should be allowed. By banning the sales backyard breeders are going to be everywhere. There will be no one keeping tabs on them making sure the animals are taken care of. No one to make sure they have veterinary care, shots, de-wormed, food and water. Also, I don't think anyone should be forced to adopt from a rescue. Potentially running the risk of behavior problems or health issues from fixing a puppy before they are of proper maturity.

	<p>With the stores there are caring employees that makes sure the animals are cared for while they wait on their forever homes. Also, the stores allow people to actually see different breeds in one location, instead of meeting multiple people in different locations to find what you want.</p>
<p>Kirsten Toy Against themselves</p>	<p>I would like to share why I oppose HB26-1011. As a wife of a small business owner, it is my strong belief that consumers have the right to choose businesses that align with their needs, interests and values. As a business owner, similar to those owners of pet stores, it is my responsibility to adhere to the guidelines established by the regulatory agencies and ensure my product meets said guidelines. It is then up to the consumer to do their research on whether or not my business, or the pet stores in this bill, meet their needs, interests and values and determine if they want to give me their business. This bill takes that choice away from the consumer and ultimately hurts this one type of small business. This committee should respect that consumers have the authority to make decisions for themselves and/or their families in regards to pet purchases and if they choose to utilize pet stores for their purchase then that is their prerogative. To pass this bill would deny consumers that right and would reduce options for pet purchases. Government should be involved in regulating businesses not in determining whether they should exist. Thank you for your time.</p>
<p>Kristi Skipper For themselves</p>	<p>I am Kristi Skipper, a breeder of Akitas. I strongly support this bill.</p> <p>This bill is urgently need for consumer protection.</p> <p>Consumers are not educated enough about what a responsible breeder does to ensure that they buy a puppy that has the best chance of a long and healthy life. Preservation breeders like me check out, then mentor their puppy buyers for the life of the dog. In addition, preservation breeders will always take back their dog if the home fails - regardless of the age or health condition of the dog. We are there to protect our puppies for their entire lives.</p> <p>Puppies bought through third parties, like retail pet stores, come from Commercial Breeders. There is no breeder to buyer connection. There is no lifetime support. There is no communication in both directions about the health of the dog. In short, a Commercial Breeder breeds a commodity. When sold to a broker or retail pet store, the breeder is finished with the puppy. The breeder got his money and is on to the business of multiple other breedings.</p> <p>We need to protect our unsuspecting consumers from this.</p>

	<p>Not only does this protect consumers, it protects preservation breeders, providing them with a full exemption so they can continue to breed sparing and selectively.</p> <p>There are only positive reasons for why this bill should become law in Colorado.</p> <p>I request that you support this bill and vote in favor of it.</p>
<p>Margaret Vaccarella For themselves</p>	<p>I strongly support ending the sale of dogs and cats in Colorado pet stores. Every year, pet store puppies and kittens come from puppy and kitten mills that prioritize profit over animal welfare, often with poor living conditions and little oversight. By prohibiting retail sales and redirecting efforts toward reputable, humane sources and adoption options, HB26-1011 protects animals from exploitation and reduces demand for cruel breeding practices. Colorado families deserve pets sourced with care, transparency, and compassion.</p>
<p>Percy Mayo Against themselves</p>	<p>This is a prejudice driven attack fueled by biased hear say testimony that is designed to prevent puppy mills but the misguided efforts will destroy a valuable resource that provides more than an animal it provides resources that a breeder cannot. On behalf of Mr. Hayworth and his sincere efforts to place the perfect puppy in our home, provide expert advice on her care and provided the direction for her training, I implore the committee to research deeper to discern the true problem of animal abuses by unlicensed uncaring puppy mills, do not destroy the small family businesses that help and give families the choice of what pet they desire.</p>
<p>Ray Coffey For themselves</p>	<p>Hello Committee Members,</p> <p>My name is Ray Coffey. I am a Colorado resident in support of HB26-1011.</p> <p>I have learned that dogs in commercial breeding facilities are often bred repeatedly and housed in cramped conditions. These practices can result in long-term health and behavioral problems for the puppies sold in stores.</p> <p>These facilities supply a retail system that represents less than 2% of the more than 100 billion dollar pet industry. Yet consumers can pay thousands of dollars for a pet store puppy that may need significant veterinary bills. As an example, in Florida alone, based on a study “The Cost of Deception: How Sick Pets Drain Florida’s Economy” commissioned by the Florida Attorney General, retail</p>

	<p>puppy sales were found to cost consumers more than 25 million dollars per year due to deceptive practices of and sick animals sold by pet stores.</p> <p>The financial toll on families who bring home a sick puppy is significant. The emotional toll is even more devastating.</p> <p>Colorado should not allow a system that profits from that suffering.</p> <p>Please vote yes on HB26-1011.</p>
<p>Robert Young</p> <p>For</p> <p>Colorado Citizens For Canine Welfare</p>	<p>Hello Committee Members,</p> <p>My name is Pat Young and I live in Arvada, Colorado. I ask you to support HB26-1011.</p> <p>The retail puppy pipeline harms consumers financially. Families often pay thousands of dollars for a puppy and may face significant veterinary bills shortly after bringing the dog home. Some stores rely on high-interest financing or lease-to-own contracts that leave buyers in long-term debt. Since the puppy buyer is unfamiliar with the breeder, there is no one to consult if problems arise and there is no lifetime breeder support for the puppy.</p> <p>The Florida Attorney General's Office reported that retail puppy sales cost Floridians more than \$25 million annually due to sick pets and deceptive practices. We should not allow Colorado families to face similar harm.</p> <p>Pet stores can thrive without selling animals. Americans spent \$147 billion on pets in 2023, primarily on food, treats, grooming, training, and services, but not live animals.</p> <p>HB26-1011 protects consumers without hurting responsible businesses. Please vote in favor of this bill.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Pat Young, Vice President</p> <p>Colorado Citizens For Canine Welfare</p>
<p>Teresa Kuhn</p> <p>Against</p>	<p>I am providing testimony in favor of keeping pet city open and able to sell their puppies and kittens. I have found that they are a very reputable and follow stringent regulations in the care and the selling of their</p>

<p>themselves</p>	<p>puppies and kittens. I'm also speaking on behalf of the employees as I don't understand why we would even be entertaining closing a small business that employs a very unique set of people, including my son who is on the autism spectrum Dustin and the pet store have been very accommodating to my son and others, and providing a place of employment where they can flourish and have steady employment to make a good contribution to our community. They are very caring to all the pets at the pet store. They take very good care of them and make sure that they are healthy and strong before they are able to be purchased. Myself and other family members have purchased puppies from pet city and we were quite impressed with the care and what they provided for these puppies that we bought. Again</p> <p>I find it very sad with all that's going on in our state that we would prioritize closing a small business such as pet city that follows all their regulations that have been set forth for them to do in order to remain open for the safety of their pets I also find it very interesting that we have the choice to abort a baby up until birth but not having a choice where we get our puppies and kittens. Yet you're looking at closing a pet store that has very stringent regulations to sell puppies and kittens. I find that a little odd and so very sad. I as a mother and a customer would appeal to your common sense and keeping a small business open so that it and the employees may flourish and make a wonderful contribution to our community in Colorado Springs. Thank you, Teresa Kuhn</p>
-------------------	---



March 24, 2026

Senator William Lindstedt
Colorado Senate, State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

RE: Colorado HB 26-1011

Dear Senator Lindstedt:

My name is Carmen Rustenbeck and I am the CEO and founder of International Boarding & Pet Services Association (IBPSA), the pet care industry's professional trade association. We provide standards, education, training, and certifications for our members who include pet boarding facilities with small retail space, pet daycare facilities, pet sitters, groomers, and dog walkers, among other pet care services providers. Our members can be found across the United States, including Colorado, as well as internationally.

As a leader in the pet care retail and service industry, and in alignment with the standards and educational mission of the IBPSA, I respectfully urge you to oppose the proposed legislation that would ban the sale of dogs and cats in regulated pet retail stores in Colorado.

This position reflects a long-standing advocacy philosophy that prioritizes education, enforceable standards, and practical regulatory frameworks over broad prohibitions. As IBPSA has previously articulated in legislative matters, meaningful and lasting improvements in animal welfare are achieved through clear standards, informed oversight, and industry collaboration—not through vague or reactionary policy measures.

Colorado's Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) establishes a system that is licensed, inspected, fully traceable, and enforceable with meaningful penalties. Pet stores are required to source dogs and cats only from regulated, licensed breeders, with full transparency and documentation.

A ban on canine and feline retail sales will not eliminate demand—it will redirect it to unregulated sources such as online sellers and unlicensed breeders, where oversight and consumer protections are minimal. Rather than eliminating a regulated system, we encourage strengthening restrictions, increasing transparency, and collaborating with industry experts to improve outcomes.

Colorado's system is built on transparency, traceability, accountability, and enforceability—principles that should be strengthened, not removed. We respectfully urge you to oppose this legislation and pursue evidence-based, collaborative solutions.

Respectfully,

CLVRustenbeck

Carmen LV Rustenbeck
CEO, International Boarding & Pet Services Association



PuppySpot®

WRITTEN TESTOMONY OF CLAIR KOMOROWSKI

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, PUPPYSPOT

Before the

Senate Committee on State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

March 24, 2026

Regarding HB 26-1011 Transfers of Certain Pet Animals

Dear Senator Wallace,

My name is Claire Komorowski. I am the CEO of PuppySpot and I respectfully oppose unless amended HB26-1011 targeting pet brokers and breeders. As we understand it, a concern the sponsors of this legislation seek to address relates to “transparency” regarding the breeder. HB26-1011 achieves transparency by prohibiting brokers from selling puppies, while allowing breeders to sell puppies directly to the public. The legislation’s prohibition of sales by middlemen brokers avoids situations in which the consumer does not learn the identity of breeders who raised the puppy, and so cannot himself, or herself evaluate the breeder’s animal welfare standards before the purchase occurs.

PuppySpot has been in business for over 20 years. We are puppy lovers focused on matching great families with great breeders, raising animal welfare standards along the way. We screen every breeder thoroughly through an initial screening, annual screening, and ensure continuous compliance standards are met, far exceeding USDA. Our proprietary breeder standards are developed by a Scientific Advisory Board of vets and animal welfare experts.

We also screen customers to ensure the home is a great fit for the puppy and provide customer protection once the puppy goes home. PuppySpot is not a company that aggregates puppies from unknown sources, holds them in inventory, and sells them to consumers without transparency.



PuppySpot®

Instead PuppySpot connects identified breeders with consumers. In some States, the breeder sells the puppy to the consumer and the sales contract is between the breeder and consumer. In those States, PuppySpot provides support services including assisting with regulatory compliance and processing. In other States, currently including Colorado, the placement contract continues to be between PuppySpot and the consumer and PuppySpot provides a broader range of functions. However, the puppy travels direct from the identified breeder to the consumer, or the breeder hands the puppy to the consumer in person. In all states PuppySpot works to make sure breeders uphold high quality standards. PuppySpot is never involved in situations in which the origin of the puppy is not known to the consumer – in all placements in which we are involved, the breeder is identified by name.

PuppySpots' efforts to screen out puppy mills have been successful. Although some activists claim otherwise, to our knowledge they have not produced evidence of puppies placed by PuppySpot subsequently burdening shelters. The buyer can learn the name and physical location of the breeder before transport, and there is no misrepresentation of the puppy's origins. All puppies come with a Veterinary Health Report from an accredited veterinarian which includes the puppy history and breeder information. PuppySpot understands that HB26-1011 will require consumers to have transparency, prior to purchase, regarding the specific breeder who raised and is selling the puppy.

This is how we do business.

Unfortunately, as drafted, the “broker” definition invites litigation over its proper interpretation. Although in our view it is not the best reading of the current bill, the bill as written could be read to require that a breeder who sells directly to the consumer refrain from getting the assistance of a company like PuppySpot in regulatory compliance, advertising, logistics, and other support functions that are difficult for a breeder to self-provide. The bill will greatly benefit from an amendment or clarification that confirms that the intent is to prohibit brokers from reselling puppies to Colorado consumers and to prevent situations in which consumers acquire a puppy not knowing where the puppy came from. Specifically, PuppySpot seeks confirmation that breeder support services that we provide to breeders who are identified to the consumer will not be interrupted. As noted, these services include, but are not limited to advertising, logistics, and regulatory compliance. It is unrealistic to expect each and every breeder, all of whom are small businesses, to self-provide these support services, which benefit the puppies, the consumer, and the breeder



PuppySpot®

We are eager to work with legislators to create a bill that truly strengthens animal welfare and hope you'll consider our proposal.

Thanks again for your time, we'd be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Claire Komorowski

CEO, PuppySpot Group, LLC

Opposition to HB 26-1011
Will Coggin, HumaneWatch

Thank you Madam Chair and the committee for your time. I'm Will Coggin with HumaneWatch in Arlington, VA, an organization that advocates for science-based animal welfare policies.

Banning pet stores will simply drive pets into the black market, where they are then sold on TikTok and Craigslist, or through sketchy rescues, and where there are fewer protections for both people and animals.

Just today, I found multiple listings on Craigslist for people selling puppies in the Denver area. I also found multiple sellers on TikTok selling puppies.

Where do these dogs come from? Who knows. There's no transparency, and there are no warranties for people who buy dogs through this meet-and-greet style.

Many of these listings could be scams, where a person is asked to provide a down payment before the seller vanishes. These online pet scams are increasingly common, according to the Better Business Bureau.

We are also already witnessing animal rescues in Colorado importing dogs that they acquire from out-of-state breeders. I have personally sat at a dog auction in southwest Missouri and watched as rescues, and brokers for rescues, bid on puppies and even pregnant dogs. They then load these dogs into the back of vans and transport them to other states.

These kinds of bad practices will not only continue under this bill, but this bill will create an incentive for them to expand.

The best way for ensuring the welfare of dogs is to ensure that there is a regulated marketplace where legal protections exist. Driving pet purchases into the black market will hurt both pets and people. Thank you.

Hello Committee Members,

My name is Carol Makowski and I am in support of HB26-1011. I am an avid supporter and member of the Colorado canine community and am an active participant in several dog events. I breed Basset Hounds occasionally and take seriously my responsibility to the families who trust me and to the dogs I raise. These are potential family members and not chattel. New owners are screened carefully and that includes home visits and periodic follow up. My contracts include a full refund if puppy/adult is returned at any time during its life. No one has ever taken me up on that.

The current pet store and broker system harms consumers. Puppies are often shipped from out-of-state commercial breeding facilities through a chain of middlemen before ever reaching Colorado. By the time a family meets the puppy in a retail setting, there is little transparency about its origins. Consumers frequently pay extremely high prices and, in many cases, face unexpected veterinary bills shortly after purchase. Some retailers also rely on high-interest financing or lease-to-own contracts that leave families financially burdened. Responsible breeders do not rely on these practices. We do not need brokers or storefronts because we build relationships directly with families. We provide contracts, lifetime support, and, if needed, take back a dog at any age. That level of accountability simply does not exist in the retail pipeline.

Colorado has already seen more than two dozen municipalities act locally to ban the retail sale of puppies and kittens. HB26-1011 creates consistent statewide standards that protect both consumers and reputable breeders.

I respectfully urge you to vote yes. Thank you,

Carol Makowski
Boulder, CO