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Sent: Monday, May 05, 2014 10:16 AM

To: Mayor Tom Barrett; Donovan, Robert; Puente, Robert; Bauman, Robert; Davis Sr., Joe; Dudzik, Joseph; Perez, Jose; Wade, Willie; Coggs, Milele; Hamilton, Ashanti; Bohl, James; Murphy, Michael (Alderman); Kovac, Nik

Subject: In regards to the city of Milwaukee Banning Pet stores....

Importance: High

Good Day,

Once again, I must thank you for taking the time to read my email, as I know it is long. Please do take the time to read it.

How does a small group of animal extremist have the right to make decisions for the 600,000 citizens of Milwaukee??? Please Put this to a PUBLIC vote, allowing Milwaukee citizens to decide.

The taxpaying Milwaukee city residents should be able to make their OWN decision on or where they wish to obtain a family pet from. What right does the city aldermen (have they informed there constituency about this proposed law, I think not) have to tell them that they can not go to a local pet store to obtain a puppy, kitten or rabbit should they choose? What ever happened to free enterprise?

How does a pet store that sells puppies, kittens and bunnies harm the city of Milwaukee? What harm have they done to the residents of the city of Milwaukee? Many of these puppies come from Wisconsin STATE inspected and licensed kennels. Do you realize that the state of Wisconsin has the toughest dog breeding laws in the entire USA?

Animal extremists will tell you that you do not know the background of a pet store puppy. Ask them, how do they know the background of a shelter/rescue dog or puppy? They can not give you any more information on any genetic/hereditary/temperament issues in the "adopted" dog then a pet store owner can give you on their "pet store puppy". Pet stores offer a WRITTEN genetic/hereditary guarantee...shelters and rescues do not.

Do you think breeders breed puppies for the rescues and humane societies? Do you realize how much expense there is in properly raising a litter of puppies? The problem is not with the breeders, as the majority of the puppies/dogs in the humane society are due irresponsible OWNERS that do not spay/neuter their dogs and allow them to roam and get pregnant and then dump the pups at the shelter. Or owners that decide they no longer want the dog and dump it at the shelter. When you go to the humane society to buy your pet, what you find are large shedding mix-breed dogs, none of which I might add, came from a so called "puppy mill". You will generally not find small breed non-shedding puppies there, and if they should be so lucky to have a small dog turned over to them due to divorce, moving, or loss of job, there is a waiting list for them a mile long. What you will find is hound/lab mix, collie/Shepard mix, pit bulls, terrier/beagle/lab, rat terrier, jack Russell mix etc. and?? mix.

Are you aware that the Milwaukee humane Society brings dogs in from other states to adopt at their facility as Wisconsin does not have a large enough stray/surrender problem to support their EXPENSIVE new facility. Don't believe it, Contact the Dog Federation of Wisconsin who has been monitoring and check the facts! You will find it very interesting. **Pet store puppies are not what is populating the humane society in Milwaukee (or any other humane society)**, what is: surrendered dogs (mostly large breed), stray dogs (irresponsible owners not taking proper care of their dogs), retired dogs from breeders will often enter a rescue (I say breeders as with ACT90 in place in Wisconsin, it eliminated all the puppy mills (according to

the Wi Citizens against puppy mills as that is why they wanted the bill)) and dogs/puppies brought in from out of state.

Many families want to add a new puppy (not adult dog) to their family so their children can grow up with the puppy and have the fun of growing up with the puppy and training the puppy to their family environment. Some families have to have a NON-shedding dogs due to severe allergies and it is nearly impossible to find one of these as a PUPPY at a shelter or rescue. Many elderly want a toy breed dog that is more easily manageable than a large breed dog and they are very hard to come by at a shelter or rescue.

I am a dog breeder and our family has been for 40+ years. I do not sell my puppies to a pet store for resale, however I do have a store front that we sell our pups from 4-days a week. Some people come to our STATE licensed/inspected facility and meet the entire litter of pups, sire and dam....and choose their new puppy. Our clients always have the option to come to our home or our shop, or both. I believe in animal welfare, but the animal extremists want to give dogs rights equivalent to humans. If you research this you will find this out.

I urge you, before voting on this referendum, please check your own facts and do not succumb to the animal rights extremist that are pressuring you to dictate what is right for the Milwaukee city residents without doing your own investigating of ALL the fact and what the ultimate goal of the animal extremists is.

[What is the city of Milwaukee going to ban next?](#) The sale of milk? Think of the poor newborn calves that do not even get to spend 24 hours with their mom before being ripped away crying (the cow and calf) to each other as the calf is dragged away (they do not go willingly). Then the calf has two options: 1) if a female gets tied to a calf hut to be grown up to continue the milking process when old enough to be bred 2) sold at auction to either become a veal calf (living in a box in a dark barn where they can not even turn around and fed a high antibiotic liquid diet and then slaughtered at a very young age to provide the pale anemic meat in your mouth meat) or sold to be raised for slaughter to produce the meat you put in your belly. Many adult cows also suffer arthritis from being forced to stand on cement all their lives, live in their own manure, many have their tails hacked off as not to smack the miler in the face while trying to swish a fly, have their babies ripped away from them and bred year after year after year for their milk. Hmmmm....this all sound worse then a dog breeder. Why do the cows not get the same protection as a companion pet? They feel pain, they have maternal instincts and they suffer....

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

Terri Gellin

P.S.

[In regards to the Best Friends Animal Society](#) (they will have a speaker at your meeting), they are no better then a "puppy mill" (I use that term loosely as is no meaningful definition of the term "puppy mill.")

Here is a link to an interesting article where they dumped a dog at a KILL shelter and some other things they have done...rather interesting reading to say the least, hence, I urge you, *please do all your research before voting:*

<http://www.examiner.com/article/did-best-friends-animal-society-dump-an-old-poodle-at-a-high-kill-shelter>

if you can not click on the link, the entire unedited article follows:

Did the Best Friends Animal Society, one of the wealthiest “No Kill” rescue organizations, dump a 15 year-old poodle called Grandpa at a high kill shelter in Los Angeles? That’s what local rescuers and an employee of Los Angeles Animal Services allege happened on August 11.

Whoever brought the geriatric poodle to the Best Friends facility in Mission Hills, California, that night believed the charity would rescue him. The dog was barely able to walk—he was matted and in pain from severe arthritis. But Best Friends did not rescue the dog. Instead, witnesses claim, Best Friends transported the geriatric dog to East Valley Shelter and left him there.

LA has a deadly pet overpopulation crisis—thousands of pets are killed per year in its shelter system. For Grandpa, the chances of surviving were especially grim. Most people looking to adopt want a young, healthy animal, not an old dog who needs emergency medical care.

From August 11 to 24, Grandpa lay waiting to be rescued or to die behind bars. He grew sicker with kennel cough. “Best Friends placed no hold on the dog, did not network the dog—nor did they ask their rescue partners to take the dog,” claims a volunteer who is familiar with the intake notes on file. “I spoke with the officer,” she told me in a phone interview. “I was honestly so shocked upon hearing the Best Friends part.”

Grandpa would have been “either” without anyone ever finding out but for another rescuer named Daniela who sent out a plea for his life on Facebook.

It went viral.

“They sentenced that dog to death,” says Carole Sax, a local animal rights activist. “Best Friends calls themselves ‘No Kill’ but how are they ‘No Kill’ if they find someone else do the killing for them? Isn’t that just outsourcing euthanasia?”

Best Friends’ response to the growing anger on social media was not a denial but a self-serving and slippery explanation:

Hi Everyone - Due to the circumstances surrounding our contract with the city of Los Angeles, there are some “set in stone” policies regarding intake at the Mission Hills facility. We are not legally allowed to do intake at the Mission Hills Center. As you can imagine, this doesn’t stop strays from appearing both through people surrendering their pets, and strays just coming by to say hello.

Per the contract with the city, we are legally required to direct the public to take these animals directly to the East Valley Shelter, or in the instance an animal appears at our center, we must do this as well. This is so the city can do their legally required procedures. Best Friends and other qualified rescues are able to pull animals after the legally required hold time has passed, giving the public the first chance to adopt.

So far in just the first half of 2013, we have pulled more than 3,000 animals from LA City shelters. We sent 64 animals to the sanctuary in Utah that were facing behavioral or medical challenges that prevented them from being immediately adoptable, as we do not have medical capabilities at the Mission Hills center aside from a spay and neuter clinic. Just like most rescues and shelters, the Best Friends sanctuary in Utah has limits and there is not always room. We do the very best we can to save every animal that we can.

While Best Friends was “doing the very best they can,” Leave No Paws Behind, a small Los Angeles rescue organization specializing in geriatric and other so-called “unadoptable” dogs, rescued Grandpa. He is currently at a veterinary hospital and LNPB has even secured an adoptive home. “But with all of their resources, they left that dog to die there,” said Toby Wisneski, president of Leave No Paws Behind, “and we weren’t going to let that happen—it’s our mission to take the dogs that no one wants.”

Grandpa might be in good hands now but he has sparked a fire.

In response to mounting complaints, the Companion Animal Protection Society filed a public records request to investigate why Best Friends Animal Society, which has a contract with LA to run its Mission Hills facility, would be permitted to not rescue animals at the facility.

One complaint from rescuer Wilhelmina Johnson is particularly stinging:

So if they've pulled more than 3,000 and 64 went to Utah, I'm wondering where the remaining 2,936 are? Are they shipping them out of state? If so, what safety nets do they have in place if an adoption doesn't work out? What protocols to prevent disease? Where is the accounting of all these animals they take from LA City shelters? for them to just dump a special needs senior at a kill shelter without so much as placing first rights or a hold on him, KNOWING what a high chance he stood of being killed is absolutely unforgivable. This is what they do with the free shelter they got from us, with all the millions and millions they have?

The position of those critical of the city's fiscal entanglement with the private charity is that Best Friends, a private rescue organization which collects \$50 million tax free per year in donations and has off-shore accounts in the Virgin Islands, should be audited by the city comptroller and the IRS, should not be subsidized with public funds, and if it is to be in business with the city, it should be obligated to become an open admissions shelter as opposed to being allowed to "cherry-pick adoptable animals for their facility while outsourcing euthanasia to city shelters."

"Since Best Friends' contract very conveniently doesn't allow them to take in animals from the public, they take the animal to a LA City shelter, says Robert Cabral, animal behaviorist and president of Bound Angels. "OK, I get that part - however what comes next distinguishes between compassion and greed. The dog, once dumped, was scheduled to be killed. Best Friends could easily have put a note on the dog and offered to take him back once his "stray hold" was up."

In addition, smaller rescue organizations complain that Best Friends is given preferential treatment by LAAS general manager Brenda Barnette. They claim that Best Friends gets to take out animals for free from the city's shelters while others must pay a \$50 fee and that Best Friends was given a "no bid" contract to run a valuable city asset, the shelter at Mission Hills, when other, more qualified rescues that have a proven history of helping the city's homeless animals, were not considered for use of the coveted facility.

Jennifer Wales, president and founder of Forever Home Pet Rescue, claims that Best Friends does not take back animals they adopt out. Best Friends denies the allegation, claiming to "always take a dog back." "Two people who adopted dogs at our adoption store, a Petco in Porter Ranch, have told us that they adopted from Best Friends and wanted to return the dogs," said Wales. "Best Friends would not take the dogs back and the people were told to take them to a kill shelter. In both cases, they asked us if we would take the dogs so that the dogs would not have to go to a high kill shelter."

Cat rescuer Yvette Berke of Petopia Animal Rescue, states Best Friends told her volunteer who had rescued a dog to "take it to East Valley, not to them." She and many others also share the concern that Best Friends doesn't do "home checks" (a pre-adoption visit to a potential adopter's home to make sure of the animal's well-being) and promotes "free animals" and "animals on sale." Best Friends, however, does require its "rescue partners" to do home checks. "They don't pay to pull animals from the shelter and got the facility in the valley for \$1," Berke says. "How does adopt-one-cat-for- \$10- get- another-one- free and no home check ensure animals' safety?"

Another ethical tangle raising eyebrows is that Barnette's daughter works for Best Friends.

A City Hall insider who is familiar with the Best Friends/LA City contract who wishes to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, told me in an exclusive interview that :

Best Friends claims to have pulled 3000 animals in 2013. We are not being given answers –not only the question of who is really rescuing the animals, but how many are their 'rescue partners' rescuing? They are taking credit for pulling animals but some are under the care of other rescue groups. They are pulling animals that LAAS is spay and neutering at a cost to the city but they are taking the animals for free. I see nothing in the contract that says they can take the animals for free. I am unaware of any memorandum of understanding that allows them to take the animals for free. Rescuers have to pay \$50 to pull an animal out. BF will say they get them for free because they do the spay/neuters and the chipping however, a number of the animals they take from the shelters have been spayed and neutered by the city's vets at a cost to the city. In essence, we are subsidizing a very wealthy org during a time that the city is so cash strapped.

Questions need to be asked. How many rescues are they taking credit for that they do not pull themselves and house at their facility? They transport animals to other states to other shelters but the final fate of the animals is unknown.

The head of the Mission Hills shelter has said that he does not follow up on the animals. They have no idea where the animal ultimately ends up.

How many animals at the receiving shelters put their animals down to make room for the best friends transports? And how many of the transports are ultimately put down or die because they were held too long and got sick?

Why are the officials that run the city not paying attention to the scam? They cannot call themselves a pet adoption center and a 'No Kill' facility. They are not taking in animals from the public. They choose which animals they wish to have.

I heard from shelter employees that BF will not do intake but will take puppies and have the city shelters affix the city impound to it even though they have never been through the system. They admit to not doing home checks. This private rescue is not beholden to the public records act even though they benefit from our tax dollars. They own the trademark NKLA, which is promoted by Barnette on public funds—who spends more time promoting them than saving lives of LA animals and enforcing our spay/neuter laws.

Best Friends claims to have taken 64 dogs to their sanctuary in Utah in 2013. It's better than not taking them but the claims of "not having enough room" to take more is simply because they have not provided enough room, which they could certainly do.

The Best Friends sanctuary in Utah, housing 1700 animals, lies on 3,700 acres and an additional 33,000 acres leased from the United States Bureau of Land Management.

If one does the math, that's 21.5 acres per animal. Bel Air, California, one of the wealthiest communities in America, is only 5760 acres for 16,582 people. So in Bel Air, where the richest people in the world live, the statistics reflect 0.34 acres per person. And you have to believe those people, the most pampered in the world, are comfortable with their little bit of space. Surely Best Friends could house more than 1700 animals—how about twice as many animals? They'd still have 10 acres each, which is roughly 30 times more room than your average movie star in Bel Air.

Best Friends should be saving many more animals given its extraordinary wealth and its slogan "SAVE THEM ALL™," which, by the way, is trademarked so that no one else can say "save them all" even while Best Friends is *not* "saving them all."

"Clearly, for them," says the city hall insider, "a seemingly unadoptable dog like Grandpa is out of sight and out of mind. They got rid of it. They dumped it at East Valley."

Thanks to Leave No Paws Behind, Grandpa is enjoying a day at the spa where he will be spoiled rotten on the way to his permanent loving h