

For the file



Terry L. Witkowski
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From: Darci [<mailto:darlingdarci@charter.net>]
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2014 9:30 PM
To: Witkowski, Terry
Subject: Opposing dog ordinance

May 11, 2014

Dear Alderman Witkowski:

As the owners of Tiny Tykes Puppies in the city of Milwaukee, we are writing this letter in opposition to the ordinance banning commercially bred dogs from pet stores. With the words “puppy mill” being thrown around so carelessly, the public has been blinded to the truth of what this ordinance will mean for them. We would all agree that it is necessary to assure that there are practices in place to protect any inhumane treatment of dogs, cats, rabbits, and other animals. Act 90 was put into place for that exact purpose, and I do not feel that rescues and the Humane Society are looking for this ordinance to pass for this sole purpose. The main arguments of Alderman Zeilinski and those for the ban have some very conflicting points that we would like to address.

The first argument for the ban was that pet store puppies have more health problems than rescues. This is not true. Of course, as dogs and puppies are live animals, and not a product made from wood or steel, there is no sure guarantee of a 100% healthy “product” (not from a pet store, rescue, or Humane Society). Since our pet store purchases puppies from breeders under the Act 90 law, we are better able to provide a health guarantee than a rescue or Humane Society. We do not have exact figures, but we do know of many people who have gotten rescue dogs and have had immediate high vet bills within the first few days. This does not happen with our pet store. The customer has more protection with a store carrying a health guarantee than an adoption with no guarantee. All of our customers are very happy with their purchase and come back again or send in family and friends. Our puppies are backed up with a **7 day vet check guarantee, and a 5 year congenital guarantee**. We take pride in our business and the puppies that we sell.

The second argument is that pet store puppies have more emotional or behavior issues. We know this not to be true, having sold many puppies that have been turned into therapy dogs. We have also sold a puppy to a family who said they would have perished in a fire if their dog did not save their lives. As I write this letter, I have a past customer in, whose dog helped her through her breast cancer. We have many references backing up our reputation. Most puppies are sold within the first 3 months of age in Pet Stores. Of course they are handled and well cared for in that time to assure the families have a well adjusted companion. Humane Societies cannot provide this assurance since they receive abused, and uncared for animals in some cases. The customer should have the right to choose if they want to take that risk or not.

The third and most conflicting point brought up at the hearing was that we ship in unhealthy dogs from out of state to sell. The humane society does ship in many puppies and dogs from southern states and from out of the country,

bringing in numerous diseases, including **Parvo Virus and Distemper**. If there are too many dogs in rescues and Humane Societies, why are more and more being shipped into Wisconsin? If you research or even ask the Humane Society, you will see that they have actually been closed down for both of these diseases. Our business does not get any of its puppies from out of state. Our store has never had to close its doors due to diseased puppies. We get all of our puppies from inspected and Act 90 licensed breeders, or we breed them ourselves. We would be happy if there were regulations put in place for everybody involved in selling puppies, including the Humane Society, to ban shipping puppies into Wisconsin to stop bringing these diseases in. It does not seem right or fair for the Humane Society to be “bashing” stores who ship in puppies, when they themselves do it the most.

Pro banners are also claiming we are harmful to the community, that we are not an asset. Our customers take their puppies to the vets, supply stores, groomers, and other places that help the economy after they take their puppy home.

The Humane Society kept claiming we pet stores could stay in business if this is passed, but we would showcase their dogs/puppies at our stores. Our business is based on us knowing our dogs/puppies, and having the confidence and means to guarantee them to a great extent. We would not make it in business for 1 month under these unrealistic conditions! Again, we would not be able to provide the health warranty that we now offer since rescue dogs usually cannot be traced back to a reputable breeder, or its history.

These facts alone should make it very clear what they are trying to do here. We are not against the Humane Society and rescues, but we are against what they are trying to do to the dog industry, to the public, to us, our business, and our livelihood. We should all have the right to stay in business, and we should all have to obey the same rules, laws, and regulations as the other, which should include a ban of shipping in from out of state for the protection of our Wisconsin dogs and puppies.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this, and we hope the facts are taken into great consideration when making a decision that could be so catastrophic for the public and the pet stores that would be so negatively impacted.

Sincerely,

Sharon Turner and Darcy Turner/Tiny Tykes Puppies

Please also read this letter written by the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association in opposition to the Illinois ordinance:

The Chicago Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) strongly believes that ongoing education is a much more effective method to increase pet owner awareness and bring about the desired positive change necessary to address valid concerns regarding unethical, unscrupulous breeders who are the ultimate problem.

Regarding the protection of the consumer, we base our concerns on the following facts: IL Public Act [098-0509](#) exists to protect the pet owners in the City of Chicago and State of Illinois. The Act provides for pet retailer penalties and remedies for consumers that purchase pets with medical problems;

Smaller ‘hobbyist’ or backyard breeders, AKC breeders, and breeders or parties that offer pets for sale over the internet or in the newspaper are not regulated by this ordinance;

A consumer purchasing a pet from a retail pet store has greater degree of protection due to IL Public Act [098-0509](#) than a consumer answering an advertisement for puppies in a newspaper or from a local breeder;

A pet sold in a pet store has the greatest chance of receiving the highest quality veterinary care should it become ill within the first year of life as a result of IL Public Act [098-0509](#);

The City of Chicago may further control standards of care in pet stores through business licensing applications issued annually;

The elimination of consumer choice through prohibiting puppy and kitten sales in reputable pet stores can result in consumers and pets suffering from a lack of regulation when seeking alternative, unregulated sources outside City of Chicago limits and possibly outside the State of Illinois; and In the case of prohibiting the retail sale of puppies or kittens, consumers will find other resources for the purebred or even mix bred puppies or kittens; the City of Chicago currently oversees the standard of care in pets stores through their licensing and inspection process.

The laws of unintended consequences can occur in situations where these ordinances have been passed with the best of intentions.

Veterinarians are specifically trained in addressing the well-being of animals, and are the best resource for educating individuals and families on responsible pet ownership from birth to death.

The CVMA welcomes the opportunity to work with the City of Chicago on a proactive public education campaign for the long term good of all pet owners and residents.

Sent from my iPad