



**PET INDUSTRY JOINT
ADVISORY COUNCIL**
1615 Duke Street, Suite 100
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**TESTIMONY TO THE MARYLAND SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN OPPOSITION TO SB626, THE PET STORE
PROHIBITION ON TRANSPORT OF DOGS/CATS INTO STATE FROM THE PET INDUSTRY JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL
(PIJAC) ON 27 FEBRUARY 2020**

Position: Opposed

As an organization that routinely supports legislative efforts to advance the welfare of animals, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) appreciates the opportunity to share our views and expertise on Senate Bill 626 regarding the establishment of an animal abuse registry. PIJAC and our members across Maryland respectfully request that the House Judiciary Committee decline to take action on the bill.

We in the responsible pet industry don't just care about animals, we care for them on a daily basis. For many years PIJAC has provided a highly respected animal care certification program intended to ensure that employees are well trained in the care of the animals they sell; a program that is widely utilized not only by persons in the commercial pet trade but also shelters and humane societies throughout the country and one that has even been adopted as a statutory standard in some states. PIJAC has worked closely with the USDA on effective implementation of the Animal Welfare Act for pets since its inception almost fifty years ago, and has joined hands with state agencies to ensure adoption and enforcement of appropriate regulatory standards. Our association has long been recognized as the voice for a responsible and humane pet trade.

The State of Maryland was recently in court attempting to defend the state's current ban on the retail sale of dogs and cats. In their defense they relied heavily on the argument that in-state breeders were not favored by the ban because out of state breeders could still display their animals in Maryland, the pet store could just not profit from the sale. This bill flies in the face of that argument and demonstrates very clearly that the sponsor's intent has always been to eliminate access to dogs and cats in Maryland.

Further, when combined with the sponsor's other bill, Senate Bill 625, would eliminate virtually every breeder, whether they are in-state or out of state, from selling dogs in Maryland. What this bill essentially says is that, if you are rich enough to find a dog out of state and travel to get it yourself, you can own a purebred or purpose bred dog.

Finally, we strongly recommend that the committee eliminate 19-703, section (b). As demonstrated by the recent [Washington Post article](#) about the dog purchasing practices of many rescues, they have been documented purchasing their puppies and dogs from breeders for the rescue community. The state should be viewing these rescues as the retail operations that they are, enforcing state law, and requiring them to use responsible and licensed transporters.

Please reject Senate Bill 626.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Likins
Vice President of Government Affairs
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC)

