



December 1, 2022

The Honorable James B. Gibson, Chair
Members of the Clark County Board of Commissioners

Via e-mail: DistrictA@ClarkCountyNV.gov; DistrictB@ClarkCountyNV.gov;
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Dear Mr. Gibson and Clark County Commissioners:

We hope this message finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally, and PETA U.S. is the largest animal rights organization in the world. We've been contacted by members and supporters in Nevada who are thrilled that Clark County is considering an [ordinance](#) to prohibit the sale of dogs, cats, rabbits, and pot-bellied pigs in pet stores. We share their enthusiasm, because such legislation protects animals and consumers alike. **We hope you'll vote in favor of a ban on selling these animals in pet stores.**

Legislative measures, such as prohibitions on the sale of animals purposely bred for pet stores, are the most effective means of decreasing the number of unwanted and abandoned animals who flood our country's animal shelters. Banning the sale of dogs and cats from high-volume breeders is a critical step toward reducing the homeless-animal crisis. Shelters take in millions of animals every year, and those who don't make it to shelters often suffer and die on the streets.

After Tucson, Arizona, banned the sale of animals from breeding mills, *Inside Tucson Business* [published an op-ed](#) by the ordinance's sponsor, who explained the following:

The puppy mill industry is regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The standards of care commanded by that agency are little more than survival-level living conditions. A dog can be kept inside [a] cage for literally [his or her] entire life. The cage may have a metal floor, have a height of only six-inches higher than the top of the dog, and be twice the dog's length, plus six inches. Those are the standards mill advocates support. Our ordinance says that being "registered" to breed under those conditions is not good enough.

Most, if not all, commercial dog-breeding operations licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are puppy mills, which were publicly recognized as "problematic" in a [2010 report](#) by the agency's Office of Inspector General. The report found that the limited oversight of puppy mills was inadequate, the process used to enforce the minimal provisions of the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) was ineffective, and federal inspectors failed to cite or document violations properly to allow for enforcement actions and misused guidelines to reduce

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penalties for violators. Even when breeders are found in violation of the AWA, pet store operators rarely discontinue obtaining animals from them.

“Purebred” and “designer” dogs frequently suffer from [genetic conditions](#) that cause pain and discomfort. Many endure lifelong disabilities, ailments, and premature death because humans have bred them to have grotesquely distorted features, such as flattened faces. [French bulldogs](#), [pugs](#), Pekingese, Boston terriers, boxers, [Cavalier King Charles spaniels](#), and shih tzus, as well as other flat-faced dogs, are breathing-impaired breeds (BIB). Many are afflicted with [brachycephalic syndrome](#), which is the [leading cause of death for bulldogs](#). BIBs have deformities that cause them to suffer from distressing and painful symptoms such as labored breathing, snorting, coughing, gagging, retching, vomiting, tiring easily, collapsing, and fainting.

Puppies, who are small and defenseless, are stolen from pet stores at an alarming rate. Many thieves target breeds in high demand and [resell](#) them to unsuspecting people willing to pay thousands of dollars. In just the last few months, puppies were [stolen](#) from two Las Vegas–area pet stores in at least *three* separate burglaries. In another incident, an adult French bulldog was [stolen](#) right out of her owner’s backyard. Earlier this year, a French bulldog puppy was [stolen](#) at gunpoint from his owner’s lap while they were sitting in their vehicle in a parking lot.

As you know, the county animal shelter is overflowing with homeless dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, and other animals and has been in the news recently for extremely [crowded](#) conditions, infectious disease [outbreaks](#), and [turning away](#) at-risk animals who need help. Allowing the sale of animals in pet stores is like pouring gasoline on a fire. It exacerbates the burden on taxpayer-funded shelters, and many people who buy animals surrender them to those shelters. Because of unrelenting [stress and trauma](#) that begin even before birth, dogs sold in pet stores are likely to experience [behavioral and psychological issues](#) later in life. People who aren’t prepared to address the special medical and behavioral needs of these animals quickly feel overwhelmed and unwilling or unable to care for them.

We hope Clark County will take a stand against breeding mills and the cruel pet trade by banning retail sales of dogs, cats, rabbits, and pot-bellied pigs. Please don’t hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] [@peta.org](#) if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration and compassion and for everything you do to keep Clark County safe for all its residents.

Sincerely,



Allison Fandl
Manager
Cruelty Investigations Department