



**An Open Letter in Support of A.4283 (Rosenthal)/S.1130 (Gianaris)
2021 Session**

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law and the general business law in relation to the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits

As proud New Yorkers and animal lovers, we urge you to pass **A.4283/S.1130** to shut down the puppy mill pipeline by ending the retail sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in New York pet stores.

Right now, there are thousands of puppies for sale in New York pet stores. These dogs got here through a pipeline of out-of-state breeders and middlemen who ship animals from puppy mills to stores in our communities. It's a cruel and broken system made possible because in New York State, it's still legal to sell dogs in pet stores.

Puppy mill dogs spend their lives confined to cramped cages, forced to breed over and over, never knowing the joys of playtime or human affection. Many of these operations have repeatedly violated the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), but the federal government has routinely failed to regulate these facilities. In fact, in recent years the USDA has made it easier for bad breeders to stay in business and during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency allowed new puppy mills to operate without an inspector ever having set foot in these facilities to ensure they meet the legal requirements to operate under the AWA.

Few people would support an industry that keeps dogs in such horrible conditions, but pet stores rely on deception and emotions to sell their puppies, marketing them to New Yorkers as healthy dogs from responsible breeders, which is far from the truth. A survey commissioned by the ASPCA revealed that 1 in 4 people bought a puppy from a pet store who became severely ill or know someone who did and nearly half (45%) report that the sick puppy died. Shutting down the puppy mill pipeline will not only keep cruelly bred puppies out of pet stores, but will also protect consumers from the financial loss and heartbreak that comes with purchasing a sick puppy.

Many pet stores have already pivoted away from the sale of puppies, developing successful businesses by selling food and supplies or offering services like grooming and boarding. In fact, of the 1,000 pet stores in New York State, less than 80 still sell puppies. Most of these stores also partner with local animal rescue and shelter organizations to collaborate on adoption events.

Ending the retail sale of puppy mill dogs in pet stores is not a new concept – other states and hundreds of cities across the country have already prohibited these transactions, and in 2019, the New York City Council approved a resolution vocalizing its firm support for the bill.

You have the opportunity to break this cycle of cruelty by shutting down the puppy mill pipeline to make it harder for commercial breeders to profit from cruelty, and public support is clear: 8 out of 10 New Yorkers support the end of pet store dog sales.

We urge you to support and pass **A.4283/S.1130** to finally end the retail sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in New York pet

stores.

Thank you for your understanding, and consideration of this historic bill.

Sincerely,

Alec Baldwin, *actor*

Andy Cohen, *radio/television host and animal advocate*

Anjelica Huston, *actress, director, producer, author, model and animal advocate*

Beth Behrs, *actress, writer and recipient of ASPCA Voice for Animals Award*

Brooke Shields, *actress, model and animal advocate*

Edie Falco, *actress and recipient of ASPCA Voice for Animals Award*

Dr. Evan Antin, *veterinarian and television host*

Jennifer Coolidge, *actress, comedian and animal advocate*

Justin Theroux, *actor, film producer, director, screenwriter and animal advocate*

Kristin Chenoweth, *actress, singer and animal advocate*

Lake Bell, *actress, director, screen writer and animal advocate*

Maxwell Jenkins, *actor and animal advocate*

Nathan Lane, *actor and animal advocate*

Sir Patrick Stewart, *actor, director, producer and animal advocate*

Patrick Wilson, *actor, singer and ASPCA Ambassador*

Paul Anka, *singer, songwriter, actor, and animal advocate*

Peyton List, *actress and ASPCA Youth Ambassador*

Whitney Cummings, *comedian, actress, producer, writer, director and animal advocate*