

**Submission
No 209**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal Breeding Practices in New South Wales
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

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Dear Joint Standing Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into Companion Animal Breeding Practices in New South Wales.

We are making this submission in our capacity as pet owners. Our dog Felix, a lovely cavoodle who is now 2 years old was bought at a pet store in eastern Sydney.

We understand that the terms of reference focuses on greater regulation of companion animal breeding practices in NSW, and that under consideration is the banning for sale of dogs and cats in pet stores.

We do not agree that banning the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores is the solution to regulating the breeding of companion animals in NSW. We also do not agree to legislation limiting pet stores only to the sale of rescue animals.

Pet stores are an integral component of pet ownership in NSW. Studies have shown that people who own pets are more sociable, less stressed or anxious, less prone to depression, more active and generally happier. In our experience, pet stores provide easy, or at least, easier access to pet ownership than rescue organisations and sourcing pets from breeders. Rescue organisations more often than not require interviews, references and letters from bodies corporate (for apartment owners) as was our experience. Some people, for lifestyle and other reasons, may not want or may not be able to care for rescue animals and may instead prefer to adopt puppies or kittens. Most breeders are situated in regional areas, requiring significant travel time to pick up new puppies, and there are often months long waiting lists for new puppies. For time-poor individuals, distance and delay can be a deterrent to pet ownership.

Pet stores offer easy access to pet ownership in NSW, and banning the sale of animals in pet stores will mean that for a lot of people, access to the adoption of animals will be severely restricted.

We also believe that the restriction of sale of animals in pet stores will have a significant detrimental effect on small business in NSW. Small business pet store owners contribute to the NSW economy through rental of premises in malls, employment and offer monetary support to animal welfare organisations. The sale of (non-rescue) animals is a significant, and generally the core source of revenue for small business pet store owners, and it is likely that many owners may be pushed out of business by large chains should they have to rely solely on the sale of products alone.

The approach to regulating the breeding of companion animals should encompass:

- compulsory registration for all companion animal breeders in NSW;
- regulation of and standards for breeding practices;
- ensuring that pet stores only source animals from registered breeders;
- requirement for all pet sales to include breeders certificates;
- regulation of and standards for the care of animals while in pet stores, and periodic inspections of pet stores to ensure standards are met; and
- imposition on pet store owners of mandatory cooling off periods for animal sales.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Naveen Ahluwalia and Tristan Chan