



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Senate Passes Bill to Improve Health and Safety of Dogs and Cats Sold by Pet Stores

DEAN G. SKELOS June 13, 2012

The New York State Senate today gave final legislative passage to a bill (S7268A), sponsored by Senator Greg Ball (R-C, Patterson), that will ensure improved health and safety of pets sold in stores. The Senate took up the bill on New York State Animal Advocacy Day at the Capitol, where legislators and animal advocates network, share ideas, and lobby for stronger anti-cruelty laws.

“Many people throughout New York State have been negatively affected by purchasing cats and dogs from pet dealers who purchase from breeding mills, commonly known as puppy mills. I am happy to be the sponsor of this bill that will now protect these animals and their owners,” said Senator Ball. “I’ve had constituents whose families have suffered through extreme emotional and fiscal costs, while these businesses make high profits. It is my belief that government should stay out of the way of small businesses, but when they harm animals and families, it’s time to intervene.”

Dogs and cats that are sold by some pet stores receive inadequate exercise, veterinary care, and protection from the spread of disease.

“This bill provides improved standards of care that must be followed by pet dealers to improve the health, safety and well-being of the animals,” said Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos. “Not only will this protect pets, but it also increases the likelihood that consumers will receive healthy animals.”

This legislation will provide that any licensed pet dealer must:

- Designate a veterinarian to care for the animals at the facility, who will be available for emergency, weekend and holiday care, as well as regular visitation;
- Develop a program to prevent, control and respond to diseases and injuries;
- Provide an isolation area for animals that exhibit symptoms of contagious disease or illness in order to prevent or reduce the spread of disease to healthy animals;
- Designate an employee to provide daily observation of all animals to assess their health and well-being;
- Maintain a daily exercise plan for dogs;
- Vaccinate as required by the state or local law all animals;
- Not sell any animal that has been diagnosed with a congenital condition or contagious disease.

Senator Ball has taken up legislation that would improve the health of pets sold in stores after hearing the story of Charlemagne, a puppy purchased in a pet store in 2003. The dog's owner, Lorianne Pagano, of Amityville, NY, discovered multiple health problems in Charlemagne shortly after she brought him home. After many visits to the veterinarian and thousands of dollars spent, Charlemagne ultimately succumbed to his health problems in 2007. Pagano has worked to shed light on some of the problems with pet stores and puppy mill dogs.

The bill will be sent to the Governor for his consideration.

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