

9 July 2018

To whom it may concern

I am writing to protest against the proposed ban on the sale of puppies from pet stores. While I appreciate that puppies and their mothers should be protected at all costs from unscrupulous dealers, my experience with [REDACTED] has been amazing. I had been looking for a small rescue dog for some time but all those that became available were large and didn't suit at all for two reasons: the first is that I wouldn't be able to manage a large dog and the second is that my home and back yard are too small to comfortably house a large dog. Consequently, when my daughter and I saw my Lhasa Apso-Maltese cross male puppy and she offered to buy it for me, I jumped at the chance.

[REDACTED] go through a vigorous selection process when choosing breeders that they represent. They interrogate the breeders and inspect both parents and the premises to confirm that they are of the top quality and are worthy of their patronage. If they are not happy with any of these criteria, they don't take the puppies.

In addition, I was subject to an extremely rigorous interview process which lasted over an hour and during which I had to assure the store owners that I was a person capable of properly caring for one of their dogs and that my home was a satisfactory place for him to live in. I honestly believe that it would have been easier for me to foster a child than adopt one of their puppies.

I can't begin to tell you the joy my dog has brought to my life. By walking him at least twice a day I have broadened my friendships as we all meet at the dog exercise park where our dogs socialise together with their owners. In addition, I have met the owners of seven other dogs which have been adopted from [REDACTED] and they are all friendly and well socialised, and get on well with adults, children and other dogs, including those much larger than themselves.

It is obvious that puppy farms should be stamped out, together with unscrupulous pet store owners, but please do so with discretion. To conduct a full scale shutdown of all pet stores and puppy breeders would be counter-productive as I believe that would just drive the practice underground. It would be better to legislate to provide more inspectors to check on pet stores and breeders state wide and shut down those who do not operate within regulated guidelines but leave open those stores and breeders who are working within the guidelines and demonstrating best practice.

Below is a photograph of my dog whom my children refer to as my "favourite child". He has changed my life completely and I don't know what I would do without him. I would not have been lucky enough to get him without [REDACTED] as small dogs with lovely temperaments are very rarely found in rescue centres.



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