

Dallas Humane Pet Store Ordinance Quality of Life Committee Dec. 6, 2021

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**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
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**TEXAS HUMANE
LEGISLATION
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The Humane Pet Store Ordinance

Will prohibit the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores.

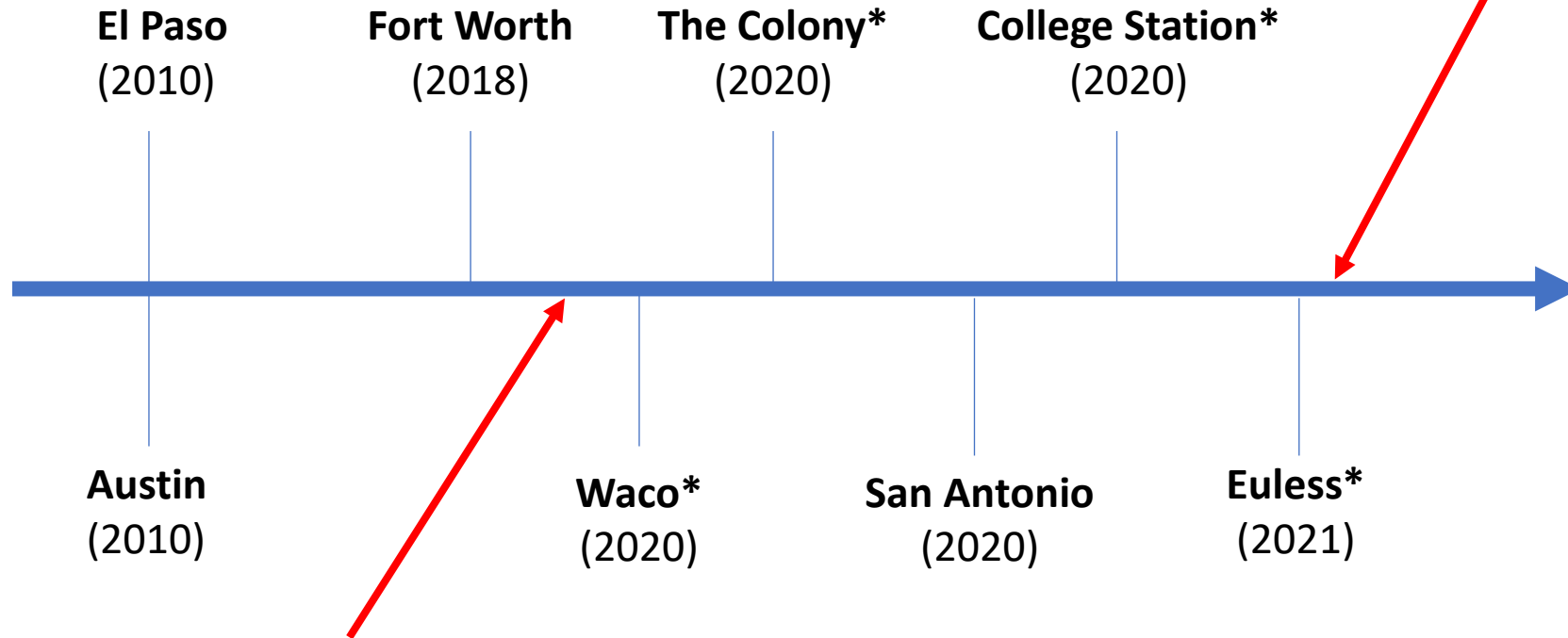
Similar to HB 1818: Statewide law that nearly passed and Dallas supported.

Similar to laws in 400 localities across 31 states, including **9 in Texas**, and 5 states.



Texas Humane Pet Store Ordinances

87th Legislative Session:
H.B. 1818 supported by
City of Dallas and many
local rescue organizations.



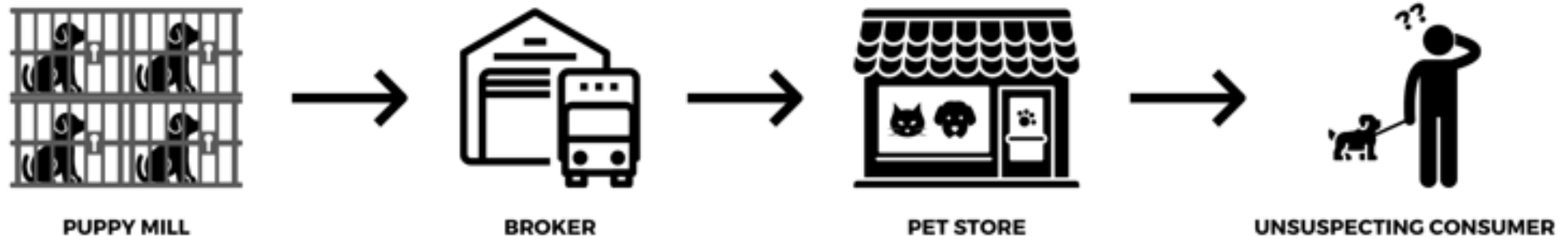
2019: HSUS released
undercover investigation at
Frisco puppy-selling pet
store.

*These cities passed a humane pet
store ordinance preemptively to
prevent puppy-selling pet stores from
moving in.

Benefits to Dallas

- ✓ Stop hundreds of weeks old puppies from being trucked into Dallas each year from Midwest puppy mills and prevent the problem from worsening should additional stores want to sell puppies;
- ✓ Protect consumers from deceptive sales tactics, ending up with sick puppies, and puppy financing interest rates that are often much higher than disclosed;
- ✓ Protect the community from the ongoing antibiotic-resistant infection outbreak connected to pet store puppies;
- ✓ Support dozens of Dallas humane pet stores that already don't sell puppies;
- ✓ Support Dallas Animal Services by moving the local pet market towards shelters and rescues, alleviating pressure on those organizations.
- ✓ Encourages people to support responsible breeders who only sell directly to the public and who frequently offer support services such as rehoming support, when needed.

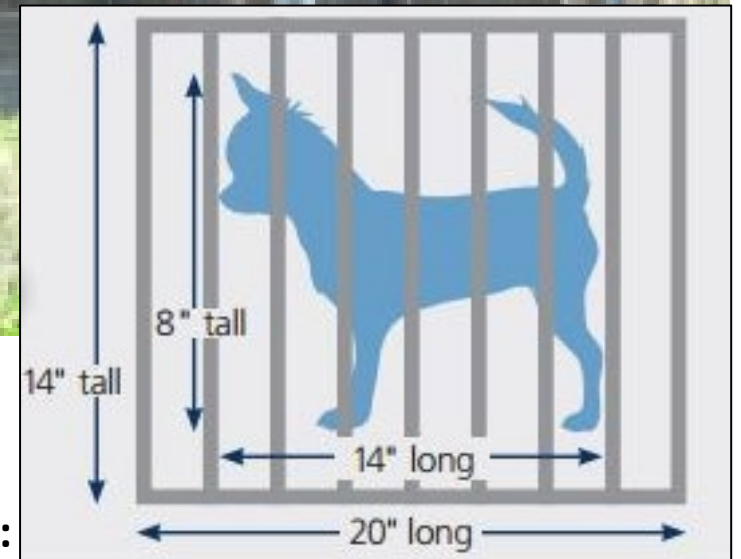
The Puppy Mill Pipeline



- Public records: From 2019-present thousands of puppies were imported into Dallas to be sold at just one puppy-selling pet store.
- Puppy-selling pet store relies heavily on puppy mill brokers—middlemen dealers who buy puppies from many different commercial breeders and resell them to pet stores.
- Utilizing brokers adds an additional leg of transport for young, stressed, and often neglected puppies
 - Preferred Canines, for example, buys puppies from dozens of breeders, transports them to their facility in Sugarcreek, OH, and then trucks them to Dallas—a **1,143 mile/17 hour and 32 minutes trip**.
 - Reports of feces/urine-filled cages, sick and dead puppies, dehydrated puppies, and failed air conditioning and heat in transport vehicles.

Where the Mother Dogs Live

- Lewis Bloom (Clay Center, KS)
- July 2020 photo shows dogs confined to small, raised enclosures with wire walls
- Kansas violations in 2018 and 2019.
- No USDA violations since 2017 despite poor conditions



USDA Cage Requirements:

Where the Mother Dogs Live

- Milton Lewis (Newport, NE)
- History of egregious animal welfare violations from Nebraska Dept. of Ag
 - Golden Retriever with puncture wounds on leg and swollen eye after being attacked by other dogs
 - Lab puppy who had leg bitten off by another dog
 - Told inspector he wanted to euthanize dogs rather than groom them
 - Photo to right is dog he euthanized rather than seeking veterinary care



No Pet Store Needs to Sell Puppies

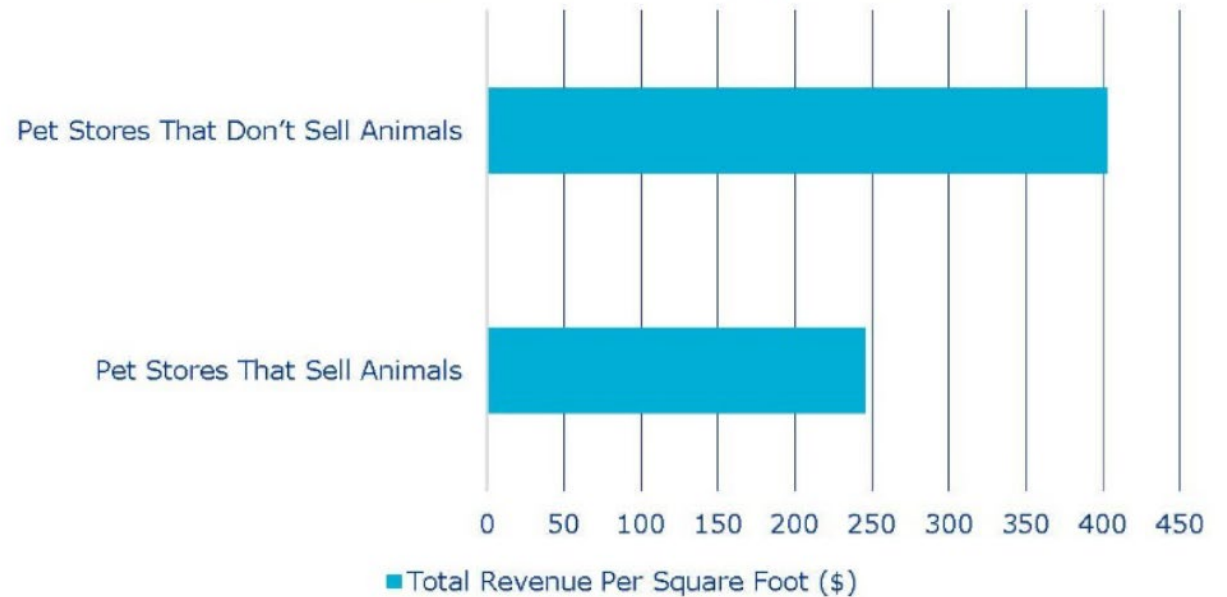
American Pet Products Association: Americans spent \$103 billion on their pets in 2020 with pet food, products, and services dominating.

Pet Business Magazine: Of the top 25 pet retailers in North America only one sells puppies, and that chain has moved down the list as more than half of the top retailers (that don't sell puppies) expanded their business in 2020.

Ex-Parthenon: One of the largest consulting organizations in the world reported the pet products and services industry has become “a potentially explosive market” and that even with the availability of online retail, 78% of people prefer to shop for their pets in brick-and-mortar stores.

World Pet Association: In 2019, pet stores that only sold dry goods reported more total revenue per square foot (\$403) than those that sold animals (\$246).

Pet Store Revenue Per Square Foot





Why not a different kind of regulation?

- City of Dallas (or State of Texas) unable to inspect and regulate out-of-state breeders.
- Violates the Dormant Commerce Clause to limit sales to in-state breeders.
- “Transparency” laws have proven to be unsuccessful in protecting consumers from deceptive business practices or the welfare of either puppies or the parent dogs.
- Almost all Dallas pet stores are already complying with this ordinance—the law should reflect that.
- Prevents new puppy-selling pet stores from moving into Dallas:
 - *New Braunfels*
 - *San Marcos*
 - *Houston*

Where Residents Will Obtain Their Next Pet



- Responsible breeders, local shelters and rescues, including breed-specific ones
- Search of AKC Marketplace and other reputable online sites show a wide variety of young puppies available directly from breeders in the area
- HSUS provides responsible breeder resources/checklist to public
- There is no evidence that humane pet store ordinances lead puppy buyers to the internet!
 - Impulse pet store purchasers won't buy at all;
 - Those who want to meet the puppy first will find local breeder;
 - Online sellers are regulated by USDA.

Responsible breeders don't sell to pet stores

Heart of Texas Akita Club of Greater Dallas/Fort Worth

"Refuse to deal with dog wholesalers or to sell puppies to pet shops..."

Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Golden Retriever Club, Inc.

All persons who subscribe to the purpose of the Club, who are in good standing with the American Kennel Club, who are in good standing with the Golden Retriever Club of America, if a member of such organization, who have indicated a willingness to serve the Club in some capacity such as committee member, steward, trophy donor, etc., who shall not have been nor presently engaged in the buying and selling of dogs for resale, and who has not and does not sell puppies in litter lots, are eligible for membership.

The Great Dane Club of Greater Dallas

All breeders and owners of Great Danes (bitches and stud dogs alike) shall: Not wholesale litters of Great Danes, sell to Brokers or Pet Shops, provide any animal for prize or raffle purposes; nor use a Stud Dog in like manner.

Local Success Stories

- **Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming:** Thriving store in Dallas; recently surpassed Petland on the Top 25 Pet Retailers list. The owners have stated: **“Good pet stores do not sell puppies and responsible pet breeders do not sell to stores.”**
- **Downtown Pawz:** Local, family-owned business; voted best pet store in Dallas by D Magazine. Full-service pet supply store offering natural pet foods and treats, products, bathing and grooming, dog walking and free delivery.
- **PetSmart, PetCo, Pet Supplies Plus & Pet Supermarket:** All have Dallas stores; none sell dogs/cats but rather host adoption events and sell a variety of pet products and services



Local Support

- At least 6 (list is growing) Dallas veterinarians have voiced support for ordinance due to concerns with the health of pet store puppies.
- 20+ Dallas pet stores have signed the HSUS Puppy Friendly Pet Store Pledge.



Local Support Con't



Complicated Financing, Lending and NDAs

- A humane pet store ordinance would protect consumers from complicated contracts and hidden, high interest rates.
- A key part of the pet store puppy sales pitch is financing, especially when a consumer cannot afford to pay thousands of dollars for a puppy outright.
- These financing schemes have extremely high interest rates that are not disclosed at the time a puppy is purchased. These agreements also include undisclosed fees, very high interest rates, and refusal to help consumers whose puppies had gotten sick or even died.
- The THLN 800-hotline has received hundreds of complaints for Dallas retail stores selling puppies. They often cannot tell their story due to the Non-Disclosure Agreements.



Next Steps

- City Attorney's office will draft ordinance based on model language provided by HSUS
- Animal Advisory Board briefing – January 2022
- Full Council agenda – February 2022
- A delayed effective date will give the local store time to sell the puppies they have and transition to a more humane model.
 - *Note: HSUS has open invitation to any corporation that runs local store to help convert all stores to a more humane business model.*