



The voice of the Canadian pet industry  
La voix de l'industrie des animaux de  
compagnie au Canada

November 28, 2013

Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee  
City of London  
300 Dufferin Avenue  
London, Ontario  
N6A 4L9

Communication by email

**Re: Discussions on the issue of pet store sales**

Dear Committee members;

On behalf of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned exercise. I would respectfully ask that you consider the following points during your discussions.

PIJAC Canada is a not for profit trade association that represents the different sectors of the Canadian pet industry. Over the last 25 years, our expertise has been recognized in many areas of interest to pet owners and their companion animals. This expertise is regularly sought by municipalities across this country, as well as by agencies from the provincial and federal governments.

For the record, PIJAC Canada has always been supportive of regulations that address areas of concerns, provided this is done in a fair and efficient manner. Responsible pet ownership, proper animal care and husbandry are just a few of the areas our organization promotes, by providing information and training to a variety of stakeholders.

PIJAC Canada respectfully submits that choosing to ban the sale of dog and cats in pet stores will not be effective in alleviating concerns over impulse buying and address the issue of unwanted animals that end up in shelters.

We have included a few attachments which offer statistical data and insights into these issues. Reference to these documents will be made within the text below.

By the nature of their operations, reputable area pet stores are established businesses in the community that have fixed addresses and remain accountable to the customers they serve. These legitimate businesses are self-sustaining and bring a steady tax revenue stream to the City. Because of their high visibility amongst residents and the general public, they see the importance of offering quality animals and quality information to their customers. Proper veterinary care and proper information on the care and husbandry of the animals they offer for sale, is tantamount to the success of their business.

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There seems to be an underlying assumption that if stores are prohibited from selling puppies and kittens, customers will automatically go to the shelter and adopt cat or dog. (See attachment - Origin of Pets) People who purchase from pet stores, are looking for puppies and kittens. Most cats and dogs in shelters are adults. Stopping local sales will not prevent citizens of London from driving to another municipality if they want to

1010 Polytek Street, Unit 14  
Gloucester, Ontario K1J 9H9  
[www.pijaccanada.com](http://www.pijaccanada.com)

Tel: 613.730.8111  
Toll Free: 800.667.7452  
Fax: 613.730.9111

purchase a puppy or kitten from a retail store or from looking to other sources like internet or newspaper classifieds to get what they want. This moves business elsewhere and does nothing to educate consumers on how to make good choices.

Retail stores are frequently a drop off centre for unwanted kittens. Many left at the doors in a box. The stores are able to find homes for those animals through their business connection with the community, again offering the proper care advice and appropriate products. Removing this source from the community means those kittens will now be directed to the shelters effectively increasing their numbers.

Banning dog and cat sales would also demonstrate a preference towards one type of business over another, even though both of them offer the same service (offering dogs and cats to London residents). In our opinion, such a decision, based on hearsay and misguided opinions, would create unfair business practices and eliminate legitimate sources where residents of London can obtain a healthy pet cat or dog.

#### Who is responsible?

Healthy animals are the responsibility of all organizations involved in the sale/adoption of cats and dogs; stores, shelters, municipalities, breeders, vets, even the media. To effectively reduce the numbers of unwanted and abandoned pets, consumers need to be educated about;

- The commitment involved in having a pet,
- How to identify a good source (See attachment - New Addition to the Family checklist attached)
- How to select a healthy well matched companion

#### Proposed Direction

The citizens of London have a right to explore as many sources as they like. Teaching them what to look for will help them to make educated decisions. To achieve this we recommend an approach that includes the establishment of a uniform message to be promoted in partnership with the city and all London's establishments that are involved in the sale/adoption of pets.

To move forward and effectively address the issue of unwanted and abandoned pets it is key to do two things:

1. Look at the data available and determine exactly why animals are being abandoned whether it is for reasons such as; health issues, change in family situation or lack of interest, etc. (see attachment - "Why pets end up in shelters")
2. Pool our resources, municipality, business, shelter, media, vets, and breeders etc. to come up with solutions which address the specific issues and educate the public.

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The following two examples outline how different sectors have worked together.

- The New Addition to the Family Checklist developed by the National Companion Animal Coalition (Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, Canadian Veterinary

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Medical Association, Canadian Kennel Club, and PIJAC Canada) addresses puppy mills, impulse buying and provides a checklist of questions consumers can and should ask when exploring any source they are considering purchasing a dog from. (New Addition to the Family checklist attached)

- **The 8th Annual National Summit on Urban Animal Strategies** (tsuas.com), which focuses on, on issues affecting pets in Canada such as sheltering, sourcing, spay/neuter, health issues . Attended by animal industry professionals from all sectors across the country (sheltering, municipal, rescue, business, veterinary,) attendees gather to collaborate on solutions to the issues surrounding pets. Much of what is worked on directly addresses the issue of abandoned and unwanted pets.

Banning does not address the issue, working together to educate consumers does. Empowering the residents of London to make good decisions will help cut down on unwanted and abandoned pets, weed out bad sources and save the city money in the long run with a decreased number of animals entering the shelter. We support an approach with a wider reaching, alternative solution that puts every business on the same level. For example, uniform licensing for any source who offers pets into the community and mandatory inspection by law enforcement guided by the Animal Protection Act of Ontario. In addition, using the collective strengths of each source to promote proper animal care and responsible pet ownership would be an effective way to engage the community helping them to make informed choices. Our association is committed to working with the city of London to achieve this common objective. We look forward to your comments.

Sincerely,



Louis McCann  
President CEO  
PIJAC Canada

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