



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-5356, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### COOK COUNTY RECOGNIZES SEPTEMBER 27, 2015 AS “PUPPY MILL AWARENESS DAY”

**WHEREAS**, September 27, 2015 is National Puppy Mill Awareness Day, where the National Puppy Mill Project and animal advocates around the country will join together to end puppy mills and their cruelty to animals; and

**WHEREAS**, pet stores selling live animals, both within the United States and abroad, have traditionally been a sales outlet for young dogs bred commercially in puppy mills; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Humane Society of the United States, it is estimated that 10,000 puppy mills produce more than 2,400,000 puppies a year in the United States and that nearly all pet store puppies come from puppy mills; and

**WHEREAS**, puppy mills are mass-breeding facilities that churn out puppies with an emphasis on profit over welfare. These mills usually house dogs in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions without adequate veterinary care, food, water and socialization. Puppy mill dogs do not get to experience treats, toys, exercise or basic grooming; and

**WHEREAS**, the inhumane conditions in puppy mill facilities lead to health and behavioral issues as well as congenital and hereditary illness and disease. Puppy mill puppies often arrive in pet stores and their new homes with various diseases including giardia, parvovirus kennel cough, heartworm and distemper. These diseases can lead to excessive veterinary costs both upfront and down the line; and

**WHEREAS**, the lack of enforcement resources at local, state and federal levels allow many inhumane puppy mills to operate with impunity. According to a spokesman from the United States Department of Agriculture, due to budget constraints, the Illinois Department of Agriculture employs only seven inspectors that are charged with overseeing more than 1,300 dog dealers, kennel operators and pet shop operators; and

**WHEREAS**, every year millions of cats and dogs are euthanized in our nation’s animal shelters because there are more pets than there are responsible homes for them. Puppy mills contribute to pet overpopulation and cause countless animals lifetimes of suffering in squalid wire cages; and

**WHEREAS**, according to information obtained from the Illinois Department of Agriculture regarding publicly run animal care and control facilities located within Cook County, in 2011 these facilities impounded 19,442 dogs and cats that were not reclaimed by the owner, and euthanized 6,618 of these animals (roughly 34% of total). In 2012 these facilities impounded 22,679 dogs and cats that were not reclaimed by the owner, and euthanized 8,035 of these animals (roughly 39% of total); and

**WHEREAS**, on April 9, 2014 the Cook County Board of Commissioners unanimously passed a law that limits the retail sale of puppies and kittens in Cook County pet stores to animals sourced from shelters, humane adoption centers and small-scale breeders; and

**WHEREAS**, across the country, thousands of independent pet stores as well as large chains operate profitably with a business model focused on the sale of pet services and supplies and not on the sale of dogs and cats; many of these stores collaborate with local animal shelters and rescue organizations to offer space and support for showcasing adoptable homeless pets on their premises; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County residents are encouraged to ‘adopt and not shop’, because adopting homeless dogs from shelters and rescues helps put us closer to our goal of making Cook County a no-kill community and helps put bad breeders out of business.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Cook County Board of Commissioners that September 27, 2015 be recognized as “Puppy Mill Awareness Day” in Cook County.