

Submitter: Crystal Elston

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB2915

I am writing in support of the HB2915 bill to bring an end to stores that sells puppies and kittens. As an animal guardian to 4 cats myself, the animal "production" industry is something that I find ghastly and inhumane, and frankly out of touch. We all know by now the horrors that go on inside of puppy mills and more frequently than not these sentient creatures, who some of us know as family, are seen strictly as \$\$ dollars to the people selling them - both mill breeder and store. People too easily buy novelty pets during holidays and special events (like Valentines Day) and these animals often end up abandoned. To surrender a pet costs money, anywhere from \$40 -\$100 to the shelter the animal is being left with, and people who no longer want their pet find this too costly and it is easier to dump them in some remote area for free.

As someone who recently cared for a stray (or abandoned) cat for 4 months, I know directly the volume of animals in shelters waiting to be adopted. After no luck in finding this kitty's owners, I reached out to 19 local shelters in October and November 2022 and was refused by almost every one due to how full they were and how long their current waitlists were. Only 2 shelters put me on a waitlist. During that four months I bought an indoor 6 x 5 buildable cage to shelter this kitty indoors during winter, got her fully updated at the vet, and just as I scheduled her dental surgery (which I still plan on paying for) I finally got a call from one of the two shelters who finally had room. I surrendered her for the original intention of finding her a home, vowed to pay for her Feb 20 dental appointment which the shelter has taken over, and as recent as last week she was finally adopted, being fostered until she is medically cleared.

People like me are going through that level of effort because all animals need homes and while puppies and kittens are adorable, a mall/puppy mills is not where people should be "buying" them like merchandise. Oregon has a serious cat dumping problem (the shelters will tell you this) and dogs I am sure aren't far behind. People who do not spay/neuter their pets provide constant ample supply of animals being adopted in shelters every year. We already have an overwhelming source of animals that need homes and people who want pets and they are coming from a place of desperate need - from off the streets. Why Oregon would continue to support "stores" that buy animals that are purposely bred for this is not logical to me and contributes to an existing problem that is quite bad. I hope we take the compassionate and sensible approach to put Oregon's domesticated pets first and encourage citizens to seek out shelters, rescue organizations, and reputable breeders to adopt their furry family companions and put an end to animal stores for

profit.

I appreciate your time in considering my perspective.

Thank you,

Crystal Elston
Newberg, Oregon