



## NJ COALITION OF RESPONSIBLE PET STORES

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### **Please Vote Yes on Senate Bill 3531**

The New Jersey Coalition of Responsible Pet Stores respectfully asks that you vote to release Senate Bill No. 3531 and Assembly Bill No. 4552/4385, which prohibit the leasing of dogs and cats.

The Coalition is a group of responsible small business owners who share a passion for the animals in our care. Every day, we find forever homes for our dogs, whether it be a family seeking a hypo-allergenic puppy or a large dog in need of a fenced-in yard to run, we work diligently to match the right dog with the right family.

To be very clear, the New Jersey Coalition of Responsible Pet Stores is fully supportive of this legislation. Coalition stores do not offer purchase options that could result in the separation pets from loving families and we encourage any initiative to protect pet owners from such financial arrangements.

However, we find it reprehensible that “animal rights advocates” continue to misuse the legislative process to disparage our stores and our breeders who provide our consumers with loving pets. Unfortunately, a small group of activists in New Jersey have embraced a national campaign promoting misinformation and emotion in an effort to remove consumer choice and drive all pet sales to under-regulated shelters and rescues.

We have seen these individuals use pet leasing options, which we do not offer, to attack our operations and our breeders. We fully expect that you will hear comments from these individuals and groups that are not only outside the scope of this legislation, but that are false and misleading.

Consistent with New Jersey law, we work with only a small group of licensed and inspected, professional breeders, who pass rigorous, unannounced inspections by the United States Department of Agriculture, their own state health inspectors, even stricter requirements of New Jersey’s Pet Purchase Protection Act, as well as far more stringent individual requirements of our coalition store owners. To put it simply, animal welfare is paramount to our operations and guides each and every decision we make. Together, our own principles and complementary state and federal laws ensure that New Jersey has the most comprehensive animal welfare standards for pet stores in the country.

Thank you for considering the Coalition’s views on this important legislation. Again, we respectfully ask that you vote yes on Senate Bill No. 3531 and Assembly Bill Nos. 4552/4385.