

I would like to submit this email for testimony at the committee hearing.

I am sharing my story with you, so that you may better understand the positive impact local pet stores who sell puppies have. Please use this when considering any further action on HB 2804.

About seven months ago, Critter Cabana, a thriving, locally owned pet store in my community, Newberg, helped me add a new member to my small family. I purchased Crispin, a five month old YorkiPoo puppy. He has added absolute joy and spirit to my home. I couldn't be happier.

I always knew that when I was ready for a dog I would go to Critter Cabana. My partner had purchased a Labrador Retriever from them some twelve years earlier and he had a wonderful experience. I knew what breed I wanted, and I knew that the management and staff at the store carefully curated the breeders with whom they work, an important step in my selection process that saved me countless hours of research and time. When I picked Crispin, I was able to spend a couple hours in the store, walking with him, playing with him in a separate and private space, and asking countless questions of the patient, gracious, and facilitating staff, all of whom were well trained and facilitating staff, all of whom were well trained and immensely knowledgeable. This was critical to me. Not only did I know exactly where my puppy came from, his lineage, his litter experience, and his health, I knew that I would receive ongoing support from the store, which I patronize multiple times each month. I love bringing Crispin there with me. He is known and warmly welcomed by name each time.

An often overlooked element of the local pet store puppy is the socialization aspect. Recently, a friend adopted a dog from a shelter outside of town. She is a sweet dog, but she is from the street, and my friend knows virtually nothing more. Just shy of a year, this puppy growls often when meeting unfamiliar people. It has taken her almost four months for her to be comfortable in my friend's home, although she is still not house trained, a lingering effect of living outside for most of her puppy-hood. I contrast her experience with my own. Getting a puppy from Critter Cabana ensured that I would bring home a balanced puppy. You see, Critter Cabana is a community hub. Everyone goes there; it is a cherished business in Newberg. And puppies are the main draw. Parents bring their children in to meet puppies; college students come to hold puppies. I myself would go there prior to Crispin after a particularly stressful day to watch and play with puppies, to help me smile and unwind. Consequently, puppies go to their new homes well-adjusted and settled. My partner's Lab did. Crispin did. He loves absolutely everyone and greets them with enthusiasm. I attribute this directly to his experience at the store. He was well-handled and loved.

To me, HB 2804 creates unnecessary hardship to consumers like me who depend on the professional connections that owners like the Johnson family of Critter Cabana have forged. They are responsible regarding the breeders they select, and provide in depth information and ongoing support for the patrons of their store. Why on earth would we ban that? This legislation seems a superfluous and damaging bill, which has a negative impact on responsible small business owners and the communities that support them. I fervently urge you to stop any further action on this bill.

I love my local pet store, and I love the puppy it ushered into my life. Everyone in the future deserves the same choice that I had.

Sincerely,
Gail Grobey
Teacher, Newberg High School
President, Newberg Education Association
Newberg Resident
Critic Cabana Patron