

**From:** Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance <[mdawalliance@gmail.com](mailto:mdawalliance@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, August 25, 2025 9:11 AM

**To:** Hinds, Chris - CC Member District 10 Denver City Council <[Chris.Hinds@denvergov.org](mailto:Chris.Hinds@denvergov.org)>

**Cc:** Sebek, Ondrej - CC YA2246 City Council Aide Senior <[Ondrej.Sebek@denvergov.org](mailto:Ondrej.Sebek@denvergov.org)>; Roland Halpern <[Roland@covotersforanimals.org](mailto:Roland@covotersforanimals.org)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support for ban of pet store sales ordinance

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Dear Councilman Chris Hinds,

MDAWA, the Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance, represents 23 shelters and partner organizations throughout the Denver Metro area, including the Denver Animal Shelter and Humane Colorado (formerly the Dumb Friends League).

On behalf of MDAWA, I am voicing our organization's strong support for an ordinance that would prohibit pet stores in Denver from selling dogs and cats that come from commercial breeders, often referred to as "puppy mills" or "kitten mills."

Why a prohibition matters:

Commercial breeders often prioritize profit over animal welfare, resulting in overcrowding, poor hygiene, lack of proper veterinary care, and minimal socialization. Animals from these facilities frequently suffer from genetic disorders, behavioral issues, and chronic health problems. Banning their sale encourages adoptions from reputable sources, such as local shelters.

"Mills" frequently operate in unsanitary, crowded conditions that can result in the spread of infectious diseases, such as parvovirus, kennel cough, and ringworm, posing health risks to both humans and other pets. Pets with untreated health issues create unforeseen medical costs and stress for pet owners, sometimes resulting in a surrender that taxes already overburdened shelters.

The cost to acquire a commercially bred puppy can be as high as \$6,000 (or more). Many customers turn to financing, with interest rates as high as 36%. If an owner is unable to make the payments the animal can be confiscated. This results in stress for both the owner having to surrender a beloved family member, as well as the pet, which may end up in a shelter, sold elsewhere, or sometimes returned to the mill to become breeding animals.

Presently eight states and over 500 localities, including 21 in Colorado, have passed similar ordinances. While this is good news, it also means that puppy mill operators and dealers that previously operated in now prohibited areas are looking for new locations to set up shop, and a ban would prevent them from opening in Denver.

This ordinance does not target all breeders, only those who mass-produce animals with compromised welfare standards. Ethical, small-scale, and transparent breeders who prioritize animal health, socialization, and minimum standards would remain unaffected.

Nor would the ordinance prevent a pet store from partnering with a shelter or rescue to offer pets on adoption days.

Again, MDAWA is fully supportive of such an ordinance.

Thank you,

**Anna Jaeger**

Facilitator

Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance

[www.mdawalliance.org](http://www.mdawalliance.org)

