



**49651 Shenandoah Circle
Canton, MI 48187**

May 22, 2024

Representative Tullio Liberati
Chair, House Government Operations Committee
Michigan Legislature

Re: Support HB 4838, House Government Operations Committee Meeting, May 22, 2024

Via email: Legan Rose, LRose@house.mi.gov

Dear Chair Liberati, Committee Members, and Representative Tsernoglou:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Bee Friedlander, and I am the president of the Board of Directors of Michigan-based Attorneys for Animals, Inc., a non-profit and 501(c)(3) organization of legal professionals and animal advocates. Its Board of Directors voted to support HB 4838.

Under the bill, pet shops (redefined as brick-and-mortar establishments selling animals not bred at the establishment) could not sell, adopt, exchange, or transfer a dog, cat, or rabbit or offer a dog, cat, or rabbit for sale, adoption, exchange, or transfer. However, pet shops could showcase adoptable dogs, cats, or rabbits from the state's animal control and animal protection shelters.

HB 4838 has been referred to as the *Puppy Protection Act* or the *Humane Pet Store Bill*. These terms refer to the well-known fact that pet shops often acquire animals from large scale breeders, a/k/a puppy mills.

My testimony will focus on one argument often made by opponents to this bill, namely that large scale dog breeding operations are already regulated by the federal Animal Welfare Act and therefore this legislation is unnecessary.

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires wholesale breeders and dealers who supply animals to pet stores, brokers, or research facilities to be licensed with USDA. Breeders and dealers are required to meet the minimum standards of humane animal care and treatment established by the AWA. It does not regulate retail pet shops. It does not pre-empt state or local regulationⁱ.

Federal regulation is deficient in two significant ways.

- It establishes only minimum standards
- It is not adequately enforcedⁱⁱ

www.attorneysforanimals.org
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We urge the Committee to report these bills.

Very Truly Yours,



Beatrice M. Friedlander, JD
Board President

ⁱ [https://www.nal.usda.gov/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare-act#:~:text=The%20Animal%20Welfare%20Act%20\(AWA\)%20requires%20wholesale%20breeders%20and%20dealers,treatment%20established%20by%20the%20AWA.](https://www.nal.usda.gov/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare-act#:~:text=The%20Animal%20Welfare%20Act%20(AWA)%20requires%20wholesale%20breeders%20and%20dealers,treatment%20established%20by%20the%20AWA.)

ⁱⁱ <https://www.aspca.org/about-us/press-releases/new-aspca-report-shows-usda-failed-act-response-90-percent-animal-welfare> Another indication is the March 2024 MOU between the US Department of Justice and USDA touted as “another significant step forward in AWA enforcement, as it outlines new actions the agencies will take to enhance their collaboration.” <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-and-usda-enter-memorandum-understanding-civil-enforcement-animal-welfare>