

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1823**

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***David M. Rogers***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relating to the remedy for the sale of sick puppies and kittens.

PETITION OF:

| NAME:                         | DISTRICT/ADDRESS:                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>David M. Rogers</i>        | <i>24th Middlesex</i>                |
| <i>Maria Duaine Robinson</i>  | <i>6th Middlesex</i>                 |
| <i>Frank A. Moran</i>         | <i>17th Essex</i>                    |
| <i>Susan Williams Gifford</i> | <i>2nd Plymouth</i>                  |
| <i>Ann-Margaret Ferrante</i>  | <i>5th Essex</i>                     |
| <i>David Paul Linsky</i>      | <i>5th Middlesex</i>                 |
| <i>Walter F. Timilty</i>      | <i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i> |
| <i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>        | <i>8th Essex</i>                     |
| <i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>     | <i>11th Suffolk</i>                  |
| <i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>         | <i>2nd Suffolk</i>                   |
| <i>Adrian C. Madaro</i>       | <i>1st Suffolk</i>                   |
| <i>Michael J. Barrett</i>     | <i>Third Middlesex</i>               |
| <i>Gerard J. Cassidy</i>      | <i>9th Plymouth</i>                  |
| <i>Brian W. Murray</i>        | <i>10th Worcester</i>                |
| <i>Jason M. Lewis</i>         | <i>Fifth Middlesex</i>               |
| <i>David Allen Robertson</i>  | <i>19th Middlesex</i>                |
| <i>Kevin G. Honan</i>         | <i>17th Suffolk</i>                  |
| <i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>     | <i>4th Worcester</i>                 |

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| <i>Sarah K. Peake</i>              | <i>4th Barnstable</i>             |
| <i>Jay D. Livingstone</i>          | <i>8th Suffolk</i>                |
| <i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>               | <i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>  |
| <i>Joseph D. McKenna</i>           | <i>18th Worcester</i>             |
| <i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>         | <i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>       |
| <i>Kay Khan</i>                    | <i>11th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>    | <i>13th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Josh S. Cutler</i>              | <i>6th Plymouth</i>               |
| <i>Mathew J. Muratore</i>          | <i>1st Plymouth</i>               |
| <i>Carole A. Fiola</i>             | <i>6th Bristol</i>                |
| <i>Mindy Domb</i>                  | <i>3rd Hampshire</i>              |
| <i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>          | <i>Second Middlesex</i>           |
| <i>Denise Provost</i>              | <i>27th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>José F. Tosado</i>              | <i>9th Hampden</i>                |
| <i>John H. Rogers</i>              | <i>12th Norfolk</i>               |
| <i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>          | <i>7th Middlesex</i>              |
| <i>Mike Connolly</i>               | <i>26th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>        | <i>13th Bristol</i>               |
| <i>Jonathan Hecht</i>              | <i>29th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Denise C. Garlick</i>           | <i>13th Norfolk</i>               |
| <i>John C. Velis</i>               | <i>4th Hampden</i>                |
| <i>Sean Garballey</i>              | <i>23rd Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Jeffrey N. Roy</i>              | <i>10th Norfolk</i>               |
| <i>James Arciero</i>               | <i>2nd Middlesex</i>              |
| <i>Colleen M. Garry</i>            | <i>36th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Tommy Vitolo</i>                | <i>15th Norfolk</i>               |
| <i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>           | <i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>      |
| <i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>          | <i>25th Middlesex</i>             |
| <i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>      | <i>4th Plymouth</i>               |
| <i>Daniel R. Cullinane</i>         | <i>12th Suffolk</i>               |
| <i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>           | <i>9th Middlesex</i>              |
| <i>Paul McMurtry</i>               | <i>11th Norfolk</i>               |
| <i>Bradford Hill</i>               | <i>4th Essex</i>                  |
| <i>Brian M. Ashe</i>               | <i>2nd Hampden</i>                |
| <i>Diana DiZoglio</i>              | <i>First Essex</i>                |
| <i>William C. Galvin</i>           | <i>6th Norfolk</i>                |
| <i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i> | <i>17th Worcester</i>             |
| <i>Marc R. Pacheco</i>             | <i>First Plymouth and Bristol</i> |
| <i>Steven Ultrino</i>              | <i>33rd Middlesex</i>             |

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|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Bruce J. Ayers</i>        | <i>1st Norfolk</i>         |
| <i>Paul F. Tucker</i>        | <i>7th Essex</i>           |
| <i>David Biele</i>           | <i>4th Suffolk</i>         |
| <i>Daniel J. Hunt</i>        | <i>13th Suffolk</i>        |
| <i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i> | <i>20th Middlesex</i>      |
| <i>James K. Hawkins</i>      | <i>2nd Bristol</i>         |
| <i>Linda Dean Campbell</i>   | <i>15th Essex</i>          |
| <i>Paul R. Feeney</i>        | <i>Bristol and Norfolk</i> |
| <i>Paul W. Mark</i>          | <i>2nd Berkshire</i>       |

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1823**

By Mr. Rogers of Cambridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1823) of David M. Rogers and others relative to remedy for the sale of sick puppies and kittens. Municipalities and Regional Government.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**

An Act relating to the remedy for the sale of sick puppies and kittens.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 Chapter 140 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 141C the following 2  
2 sections:-

3 Section 141D. For the purposes of this, the following words shall have the following  
4 meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

5 “Buyer”, a person who purchases an animal from a seller without the intent to resell the  
6 animal.

7 “Cat”, a member of the Felis catus family.

8 “Dog”, a member of the Canis familiaris family or a resultant hybrid.

9 "Kitten”, a cat under 1 year of age.

10           “Offer for sale”, to sell, offer for sale or adoption, barter, auction, give away or otherwise  
11 find a permanent physical placement for a dog or cat.

12           “Pet shop”, a business licensed under section 39A of chapter 129.

13           “Puppy”, a dog under 1 year of age.

14           “Rescue organization”, an organization the primary mission and practice of which is the  
15 placement of abandoned, unwanted, neglected or abused animals, that does not obtain dogs or  
16 cats from a breeder or broker for payment or compensation and that is an organization exempt  
17 from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code or any corresponding  
18 sections of the federal Internal Revenue Code, as amended from time to time.

19           “Seller”, an individual, partnership, association or corporation or an officer or employee  
20 of an individual, partnership, association or corporation that sells animals to the public.

21           “Unfit for sale”, a defect that is congenital or hereditary and that has a significant adverse  
22 effect on the health of the puppy or kitten or a disease, deformity, injury, physical condition or  
23 illness that has a significant adverse effect on the health of the puppy or kitten and which was  
24 manifest, capable of diagnosis or likely to have been contracted prior to or at the time of the sale  
25 or delivery of the puppy or kitten to the buyer.

26           Section 141E.

27           (a) A veterinarian licensed in the commonwealth may declare a puppy or kitten unfit for  
28 sale in advance of or after the sale by providing a written statement that includes:

29           (i) the name and address of the buyer or potential buyer;

- 30 (ii) the date on which the puppy or kitten was examined;
- 31 (iii) the breed, sex and age of the puppy or kitten;
- 32 (iv) an affirmation that the veterinarian examined the puppy or kitten;
- 33 (v) a diagnosis that: (A)(1) the puppy or kitten had previously had a contagious or  
34 infectious disease or severe parasitism, currently has a contagious or infectious disease or severe  
35 parasitism or has died from a contagious or infectious disease or severe parasitism; (2) that the  
36 veterinarian found the presence of symptoms of the disease or severe parasitism; and (3) that the  
37 disease or severe parasitism is likely to have been contracted prior to or at the time of the sale or  
38 delivery of the puppy or kitten to the buyer; or (B) the puppy or kitten has a congenital or  
39 hereditary condition that: (1) significantly and adversely impacts the health of the puppy or  
40 kitten; (2) requires hospitalization or a nonelective surgical procedure; or (3) caused the death of  
41 the puppy or kitten;
- 42 (vi) the precise findings of the examination, diagnostic tests or necropsy;
- 43 (vii) the treatment recommended, if any, and an estimate or the actual cost of the  
44 treatment;
- 45 (viii) an affirmation that the examination occurred: (A) within 14 days after the transfer  
46 of the puppy or kitten if the puppy or kitten was declared unfit for sale based on an illness that  
47 existed in the puppy or kitten prior to or at the time of the sale or transfer of the puppy or kitten;  
48 (B) within 1 year after the sale or transfer of a puppy or kitten if declared unfit for sale based on  
49 a hereditary or congenital condition that has a significant adverse effect on its health; or (C)

50 within 1 year after the sale or transfer of a puppy or kitten if the breed, sex or health of the  
51 animal was misrepresented at the time of the transfer; and

52 (ix) the veterinarian's name and signature and the address and telephone number of the  
53 veterinarian's primary place of veterinary practice.

54 (b) A puppy or kitten shall not be found unfit for sale based upon:

55 (i) injuries sustained or illnesses likely to have been contracted subsequent to the date of  
56 transfer;

57 (ii) a health problem or hereditary or congenital condition if the problem or condition was  
58 separately disclosed by the seller in writing at the time of sale and the seller and the buyer sign  
59 the written disclosure at the time of sale;

60 (iii) a hereditary or congenital condition if the seller provides the buyer with written  
61 documentation at the time of sale or transfer establishing that, prior to breeding, the puppy or  
62 kitten's parents were screened for health issues according to breed-specific protocols

63 and requirements established by the Canine Health Information Center or a comparable  
64 recognized animal health registry; or

65 (iv) veterinary findings of internal or external parasites unless the puppy or kitten is  
66 clinically ill or dies due to the condition.

67 (c)

68 (1) If a purchased puppy or kitten has been declared unfit for sale under subsection (b),  
69 the buyer may:

70 (i) return the puppy or kitten to the seller for treatment by a veterinarian at no cost to the  
71 buyer; provided, however, that the puppy or kitten shall be returned to the buyer when the puppy  
72 or kitten's health has been cleared by the veterinarian.

73 (ii) return the puppy or kitten to the seller for a refund of the purchase price, the sales tax  
74 paid and any additional point of sale fees paid, and reimbursement for reasonable veterinary fees  
75 paid for the diagnosis and treatment of the puppy or kitten in an amount not to exceed the  
76 original purchase price of the puppy or kitten and the sales tax;

77 (iii) if a replacement dog or cat of equivalent value is available and satisfactory to the  
78 buyer, exchange the puppy or kitten for the dog or cat and provide reimbursement to the buyer  
79 for reasonable veterinary fees paid for the diagnosis and treatment of the puppy or kitten in an  
80 amount not to exceed 150 percent of the original purchase price of the puppy or kitten, the sales  
81 tax paid and any additional point of sale fees paid; or

82 (iv) retain the purchased puppy or kitten and receive reimbursement for reasonable  
83 veterinary fees paid for the diagnosis and treatment of the purchased puppy or kitten in an  
84 amount not to exceed the original purchase price of the puppy or kitten, the sales tax paid and  
85 any additional point of sale fees paid on the original purchase of the puppy or kitten.

86 A seller of a puppy or kitten shall inform a buyer of the buyer's options under this section  
87 at the point of sale.

88 (2) If: (i) within 14 days after delivery of the puppy or kitten the puppy or kitten dies  
89 because on an illness that existed in the puppy or kitten prior to or at the time of the sale or  
90 delivery of the puppy or kitten; or (ii) within 1 year after the sale or delivery of a puppy or kitten  
91 the puppy or kitten dies because of a hereditary or congenital condition that has a significant



92 adverse effect on its health, the buyer may obtain reasonable veterinary fees for the diagnosis,  
93 treatment and disposal of the purchased puppy or kitten in an amount not to exceed the original  
94 purchase price of the puppy or kitten, the sales tax paid and any additional point of sale fees paid  
95 and: (A) a refund of the purchase price of the puppy or kitten, the sales tax paid and any  
96 additional point of sale fees paid; or (B) a replacement dog or cat that is of equivalent value and  
97 satisfactory to the buyer.

98 (3) Nothing in this subsection shall require a seller to provide a buyer with a replacement  
99 dog or cat if a replacement dog or cat is not available.

100 For the purpose of this subsection, “puppy” or “kitten” shall mean a puppy or kitten that  
101 was under 1 year of age at the time of purchase.

102 (d) If a seller wishes to contest a demand made by a buyer for veterinary expenses or for  
103 a refund or an exchange under this section, the seller may require the buyer to produce the puppy  
104 or kitten for examination by a second licensed veterinarian designated by the seller and at the  
105 seller’s expense not more than 30 days after the demand. If the puppy or kitten is deceased, the  
106 seller may have the second veterinarian review records provided by the buyer’s veterinarian,  
107 including the necropsy report. If the buyer and the seller are unable to reach an agreement as set  
108 forth in subsection (d) within 10 business days after receipt of the purchased puppy or kitten for  
109 the examination, the buyer may initiate an action in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover  
110 or obtain a reimbursement of veterinary expenses or for a refund or an exchange.

111 (e) Unless the seller contests the remedy chosen by the buyer under subsection (c), the  
112 remedy shall be made to the buyer not more than 30 days after the seller receives the  
113 veterinarian’s statement that the puppy or kitten was unfit for sale.

114 (f) Nothing in this section shall limit the rights or remedies otherwise available to a buyer  
115 under any other law.

116 (g) This section shall not apply to: (i) shelters or nonprofit organizations that house or  
117 adopt animals to protect the animals from cruelty, neglect, abuse or homelessness; (ii) municipal  
118 animal control facilities; and (iii) facilities that contract with a municipality to assist in the  
119 adoption of stray animals as part of the municipality's animal control services.