

## The Puppy Mill Project's Local Ambassador Opportunity

Thank you for your interest in helping The Puppy Mill Project further its mission of abolishing the commercial breeding of puppies, kittens and rabbits. Commercial breeding is the cruel practice of warehousing companion animals for the sole purpose of breeding for profit. Nearly all USDA Commercial breeders place their profits over the health and welfare of the animals. In addition to being cruel, commercial breeding is swiftly becoming outdated with the passing of over 260 humane pet store ordinances in cities and states (California and Maryland).

The Puppy Mill Project welcomes you as an Ambassador and would be happy to assist you in getting a local ordinance in your town. Following are some steps and pointers from our experience, both successful and pending. You do not have to have a pet store selling commercially bred pets to start the process. Being preemptive is good! As more ordinances pass, pet stores will be looking for new towns in which to move—make sure it isn't yours. Keep in mind, humane pet store ordinances do not effect responsible breeders and do not require businesses to close their doors. Humane pet store ordinances require the pet store to partner with area rescue organizations to offer rescue animals instead of those puppies, kittens and rabbits obtained from mills.

- Discretion** is key. We highly recommend starting your process quietly. There is no reason to alert the pet stores of your goals.

- Contact** your mayor or local council leader. **Request** a meeting. Once you have the appointment, we will be happy to furnish you with a sample ordinance and fact sheet to present. Find out to the best of your ability where your mayor stands on a humane pet store ordinance. Your mayor will want to do his/her own research. Respectfully tell him/her you plan on contacting the rest of your city's council.

- Contact** the other council members. This can be done by email. Keep all correspondence professional, factual and above all, respectful. Provide them with the same information you have given the mayor. Feel free to meet with the council people in person, too.

- Save** all your correspondence in an e-file or paper file. You will want it.

- Rally** community support. Again, this is best done quietly and not in a public manner. Ask your neighbors and friends to *respectfully* email the council members and mayor to request they pass a humane ordinance. This helps to get the issue on their "radar screen" and insure them it is not just one resident making the request. Know that you will need to provide your friends and neighbors with the email addresses for your council. Make it as easy as possible for people to complete the task.

- Contact** your local animal control, shelters and rescues to see if they will help you. The directors of these operations will be viewed as "experts" and their support is invaluable. They also have a wealth of volunteers and supporters who will help you fill seats at council meetings.

- Be persistent and polite.** The wheels of government move incredibly slowly. When you get the issue on

the council agenda, make sure you attend the meeting to speak for the animals and thank your elected officials for listening. The ordinance will not be passed on its first reading. You may have to come back many, many times. Ask your fellow animal lovers to attend and speak on behalf of a humane ordinance. Filled seats, which represent voters, get their attention!

**Social Media** can be a very useful tool but you must be careful to keep your content accurate and respectful. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are great ways to let people know that your town's residents are pursuing a humane community. Be advised that the pet stores are smart and will watch to see which towns are considering action. Be very careful in naming pet stores by name. You can set up a social media public page to help spread the word once the ball is rolling. Some examples of Facebook pages are *Go Humane, Naperville, Go Humane Lake County and Safe Pets for Joliet*.

You can contact The Puppy Mill Project with questions or for support during this process at [info@pupymillproject.org](mailto:info@pupymillproject.org). Thank you for being a voice for the voiceless.