

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement from Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council President and CEO Mike Bober on the Humane Society's 2019 Horrible Hundred Report:

“The Humane Society of the United States’ 2019 Horrible Hundred report stirs the public’s emotions and probably helps their fundraising, but it does little to improve animal well-being. It targets regulated, inspected breeders instead of calling attention to those who willfully disregard and break the laws in place to protect animals. In doing so, this report furthers the fiction that pet store sales bans impact bad breeders and misleads those who truly want to improve animal welfare.

The HSUS issues this report to try to convince the public that all breeders and brokers who sell to pet stores and online are bad actors. To create it, their researchers seek out and describe inspection citations and negative public website reviews to support their position. What the HSUS fails to acknowledge—and is most important to note—about the USDA and state records used in preparing this report is that they exist because those breeders and brokers are complying with the law, obtaining the required licenses and operating in a transparent manner. This report doesn’t call out the true bad actors for the same reason pet sale bans don’t affect them—because they operate illegally, they don’t have a paper trail and don’t sell through pet stores. Assigning value to unverifiable online reviews, which we all know are increasingly used to indefensibly smear business, political and personal reputations, is simply irresponsible.

The HSUS’ misguided campaign urging people to stop buying puppies from pet stores and reputable online sources only drives the public towards unscrupulous, illegal sellers and fuels market demand for the bad actors. USDA-licensed breeding facilities and the pet stores who sell their puppies offer consumer protections such as the legally-required opportunity to review inspection reports and, in many states, mandated purchase warranties.

We at PIJAC are fighting for the day when all animals receive the care they deserve every day of their lives. But while the HSUS attacks hard-working, licensed breeders, PIJAC works to support legislation that establishes and strengthens meaningful sourcing restrictions and standards of care. What will put the bad actors out of business and ensure companion animal well-being is to focus resources on evaluating and strengthening national standards, applying them to sources including stores, licensed breeders, shelters and rescues, and vigorously enforcing them. When it comes to our companions, care is care no matter where.”

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About PIJAC

Since 1970, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has protected pets, pet owners and the pet industry – promoting animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, fostering environmental stewardship, and ensuring the health and availability of pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers’ representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations.