

My name is Sarah Henderson from PJs Pets

Thank you Mayor Brodie and Richmond City Council for the opportunity to speak today.

I would also like to begin with speaking about the city's proposal for a new bylaw in Richmond regarding puppy sales.

- A concern of the city at this time is the growing population in our local shelters which they feel is due to the pet stores. A 2008 study performed by Ipsos Reid indicated that only 10% of dogs and 9% of cats owned by Canadians came from pet stores. With 90% coming from other sources why accept the argument that pet stores are a major source of the problem? For example at PJs Pets in Richmond we performed our own survey. Since 2007 of the total amount of people polled who purchased puppies, 89% still own their dog. 5% were refunded, and 6% no longer own the dog.
- A ban of the sale of puppies will have the negative impact of the loss of employment in Richmond. All pet stores currently employ staff whose job description is a kennel technician. This position deals solely with the care and wellbeing of the puppies in the store.
- In addition, community related positions will be seriously compromised, such as volunteer programs for people of all abilities. Students earning CAPP hours, and exchange students from countries such as Japan.
- Pet stores are accountable, they operate from a fixed address, provide medical records, offer expert advice and provide after sale support.
- Responsible pet ownership is as important to pet stores as to any other facility. For example at PJs Pets we screen potential pet owners based on a set criteria that includes; lifestyle, energy level and home environment. We discourage the purchase of pets as gifts. We promote spay and neutering in the form of a monetary gift certificate upon proof of altering.
- Pet stores are part of the solution, not part of the problem. Municipalities need strong partnership to help them address pet related issues with their citizens. Pet stores can help support the municipality in their efforts to target and deliver their message and also develop legislation that is fair and efficient for everyone.

Thank you again for giving me this time to speak. We encourage the city staff to work with us for resolution. I would urge the city council at this time to table this issue in order to focus on an effective solution to the problems we all face.