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From: Betty Galligan <betty@newberrypr.com>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 5:27 PM
To: Rep. Solomon, Joseph J. Jr.; Rep. O'Brien, William W.; repcaldwell@rilegislature.gov; Rep. Casey, Stephen M.; Rep. DeSimone, Anthony J.; repfinkelman@rilegislature.gov; Rep. Kennedy, Brian Patrick; Rep. McGaw, Michelle E.; repnewberry@rilegislature.gov; Rep. Phillips, Robert D.; Rep. Potter, Brandon C.; repquattrocchi@rilegislature.gov; Rep. Sanchez, Enrique George; Rep. Serpa, Patricia A.; repvoas@rilegislature.gov; House Corporations Committee
Subject: NO to H5214

Dear Legislator:

As a longtime, responsible pet bird owner (50+ years) and Rhode Island resident, I oppose House Bill 5214.

This bill paints all bird breeders and pet shops as being guilty of animal cruelty. Rhode Island already has animal cruelty laws, including Title 4, Chapter 1, titled Cruelty to Animals (Gen. Laws, 1956, § 4-1). This and other laws can be enforced in cases of animal cruelty. Pet shops are heavily regulated, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulates bird breeders.

I've been a longtime customer of Jungle Junction (originally in Pawtucket, and for many years now located in Cumberland). The owner, Renee Ducharme, is a Certified Avian Expert and would NEVER do anything that remotely borders on animal cruelty. In fact, she is so discerning of the customers who want to purchase birds from her, that she sometimes steers people away from buying until they can demonstrate their responsibility for bird ownership. I also know that she only does business with responsible bird breeders she has vetted. A longtime bird owner herself, she's been in the business as a highly respected, highly credible expert and business owner for many decades and would never risk her reputation or do anything to jeopardize birds or her customers.

If this bill were to pass, where would I and people interested in bird ownership go to buy a bird? Are my state legislators trying to tell me that I cannot own a bird unless I purchase it from a rescue place? What if I want to purchase a young bird, as I have done 28 years ago when I purchased my 9-month old parrot from Jungle Junction? Rescue birds are not for everyone, as they often have adjustment issues and sometimes trauma from being in another home. This bill is like telling a consumer that you can't buy a new car, you MUST buy a used one. It just doesn't make sense.

H5214 is a redundant, controlling and superfluous law. Animals in pet shops are already protected under multiple layers of law and regulation. I believe Rhode Island legislators should be using our state's resources on more important matters (like reducing energy costs and inflation) than writing redundant laws that will harm small businesses like Jungle Junction.

Please stop H5214 before this unwarranted bill further advances the radical animal rights agenda to remove all pets from our lives. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Galligan
Riverside, RI 02915