

Lou Mansolillo

From: Denise Cabral <goshawk3@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 12:45 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: Rhode Island House Bill 5214, parrot ban

I oppose House Bill 5214 as a representative of the American Federation of Aviculture, and on behalf of my bird-owning friends in Rhode Island, and as a responsible animal owner. 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. H5214 is a redundant and superfluous law. Animals in pet shops are already protected under multiple layers of law and regulation. The few Rhode Island shops left with parrots for sale find educated customers are better customers. This bill would simply drive incoming revenue and taxes to other states.

I urge you to either vote no or remand this bill to a study committee comprised of at least some of the stakeholders directly affected by this bill. The hasty way this bill has been proposed has left local bird breeders, pet parrot owners, and affected pet businesses with inadequate time to formulate responses.

It truly constitutes restraint of trade to restrict the ability of a business to select its stock from one already biased source, as this bill proposes. Further, the writers of this bill are in direct competition with the affected pet stores. Like it or not, trading adoption fees, adoption donations, or donated labor in return for a pet parrot is still a sale, still a transaction. Please do not give these bill writers an unfair monopoly of the pet parrot business in your state. Animal care facilities or animal rescue organizations requiring any kind of compensation in return for a pet should not be exempt from the definition of a pet store or sale.

By far the most egregious part of this bill is the proposed ban on displays or educational programs. Why would you want to condemn your citizens to ignorance by denying them the opportunity to directly see and learn about parrots? What is shown on the media is a totally inadequate representation of the reality these creatures present. How else are people to learn what animals, if any, they have an affinity for? In addition, this ban would subject anyone whose pet parrot was simply admired during a visit to the outside world to a possible fine. This proposed ban is a direct violation of our civil right to freedom of speech and expression.

Please protect the rights of Rhode Island's parrot-owning citizens to liberty and the pursuit of happiness with their pets.

Please stop H5214 before this bad bill further advances the radical animal rights agenda to remove all pets from our lives.

Please vote no on H5214 or send it to a study committee for fair, even-handed public review.

Thank you for your time, and have a good day.

Sincerely,

Denise Cabral

Massachusetts Cage Bird Association
American Federation of Aviculture
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