

## Lou Mansolillo

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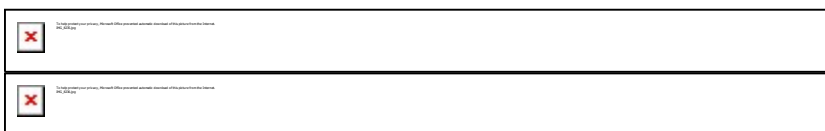
**From:** Melodie Vazquez <melodievazquez14@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2025 1:25 PM  
**To:** Rep. Shekarchi, K Joseph; Rep. Blazejewski, Christopher R.; Rep. Chippendale, Michael W.; Rep. Abney, Marvin L.; Rep. Ackerman, Mia A.; Rep. Ajello, Edith H.; Rep. Alzate, Karen; Rep. Azzinaro, Samuel A.; Rep. Baginski, Jacquelyn M.; Rep. Batista, Jose F.; Rep. Bennett, David A.; Rep. Biah, Nathan W.; Rep. Boylan, Jennifer; Rep. Brien, Jon D.; Rep. Caldwell, Justine A.; Rep. Carson, Lauren H.; Rep. Casey, Stephen M.; Rep. Casimiro, Julie A.; rep-cortvriend@rieglislater.gov; Rep. Corvese, Arthur J.; Rep. Costantino, Gregory J.; Rep. Cotter, Megan L.; Rep. Craven, Robert E.; Rep. Cruz, Cherie L.; Rep. Dawson, Matthew S.; Rep. DeSimone, Anthony J.; Rep. Diaz, Grace; Rep. Donovan, Susan R; Rep. Edwards, John G.; Rep. Fascia, Richard R.; Rep. Felix, Leonela; Rep. Fellela, Deborah A.; Rep. Finkelman, Alex S.; Rep. Fogarty, Kathleen A.; Rep. Furtado, Jenni Azanero; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J.; Rep. Handy, Arthur; Rep. Hopkins, Marie A.; Rep. Hull, Raymond A.; Rep. Kazarian, Katherine S.; Rep. Kennedy, Brian Patrick; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M.; Rep. Knight, Jason; Rep. Lima, Charlene; Rep. Lombardi, John J.; Rep. Marszalkowski, Alex; Rep. McEntee, Carol Hagan; Rep. McGaw, Michelle E.; Rep. McNamara, Joseph M.; Rep. Messier, Mary; Rep. Morales, David; Rep. Nardone, George A.; Rep. Newberry, Brian C.; Rep. Noret, Thomas E.; Rep. O'Brien, William W.; Rep. Paplauskas, Christopher G.; Rep. Phillips, Robert D.; Rep. Perez, Ramon A.; Rep. Place, David J.; Rep. Potter, Brandon C.; Rep. Quattrocchi, Robert J.; Rep. Read, III, Earl A.; Rep. Roberts, Sherry; Rep. Sanchez, Enrique George; Rep. Santucci, Paul M.; Rep. Serpa, Patricia A.; Rep. Shallcross Smith, Mary Ann; Rep. Shanley, Evan P.; Rep. Slater, Scott; Rep. Solomon, Joseph J. Jr.; Rep. Speakman, June; Rep. Spears, Tina L.; Rep. Stewart, Jennifer A.; Rep. Tanzi, Teresa A.; Rep. Voas, Brandon T.  
**Subject:** Support of Bill H5214

Hello, My Name is Melodie Vazquez and I am writing to you in regards to Supporting the Bill H5214.

I am a Bird owner myself and have 8 birds in my home ranging from conures, a budgie and cockatiel. In addition to my flock, I am a former zookeeper from Southwick's Zoo in the Bird department and I've spent several years volunteering in organizations like Rhode Island Parrot Rescue. My goal is to help the parrot community in need as well as expanding my knowledge and experience with these feathery creatures.

I thought I could help as many birds as possible but after some time, I realized I could not do it alone. I receive messages nearly every month of people asking me to take in their birds for a variety of reasons. They see that I have some of my own and love them very much and that I have years of experience. As an individual, I have turned down many people in request of taking in their birds as it is too much for me to handle on my own and often refer them to Rhode Island Parrot Rescue. Unfortunately I am aware that they are experiencing an overflow of surrender requests and often have a wait list.

In addition to this, I often shopped at pet supplies stores for toys and pellets for my birds. Below are some photos of Birds that are sold in places like Petco, Petsmart and Pet supplies Plus. These birds are often babies whose feathers are already destroyed from improper handling from transportation. With broken feathers even mutilation from wing clipping. These birds undergo feather clipping to prevent them from flying and as you can see in the photo below with some grey and yellow cockatiels, they are bleeding on the ends of their wings from poorly skilled employees or breeders chopping away at their wings. I have seen veterinarians clip feathers without causing them to bleed or have permanent damage. Although I am personally against wing clipping as birds are meant to fly, I do understand the reasoning as to why some bird owners choose to do so. There are green cheek conures here with damaged wings and tail feathers from poor handling and parakeets that are clinging to the sides of their cages from fear. There are times where there are nearly no perches in the enclosures for the birds, or no food and water bowls placed out for them and they will be left with most of the day without these needs until a staff member has the time to take care of them.





When I come across these stores, I often leave without purchasing anything. I have swapped over to places like amazon or family owned pet shops like jungle junction. I do love the supplies she has to offer as well as the boarding availability and vet access. I'm aware that the owner has come forward in protest of this bill. In that, I want to note that I have seen her sell baby birds to families with kids without asking about their knowledge or experience. I've witnessed her come out to the main floor to show a budgie to the child where, yes, the small child was not afraid of the bird so the bird was sold to The family. However, she did not ask any questions in regard to their set up at home, their diet or any care and husbandry practices. I did not see her take the time to educate this family about what the bird would need and how to integrate this bird with the bird they already had at home. Because not all birds get along and if this other bird has not been recently seen by a vet, they could transfer illness to other birds in the home. I do believe that matters like this are important when it comes to the success of an adoption. I noticed that these important factors were not discussed and already having one bird in the home does not qualify a family to be properly informed. These matters should be discussed regardless of their current experience but at the end of the day, most breeders care more about a transaction than the future of the birds they sell. I ask that if this shop owner is granted the opportunity to continue selling parrots that she offers educational courses and training workshops prior to selling any bird. This would help set families up for success in being able to maintain proper husbandry skills, learn body language and possible signs of illness as well as safely integrating birds together as a flock.

So I ask you, as an individual parrot owner who turns down dozens of birds every year by other families and as a member of parrot rescue organizations, that we move forward with the bill H5214 and place a ban on breeder / parrot sales in the parrot community. I understand that this does not prevent purchases outside the state of Rhode Island but there are many visitors from Massachusetts and Connecticut that come to Rhode Island in search of adopting a bird in need from these rescues.

This would be a huge help for our behalf as we are doing the best we can to try to manage the amount of surrendered parrots, but we need your help in banning the breeder sales in our community.  
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Melodie Vazquez