

May 14, 2026



Sent via email to: TBD

**RE: Recommendation to Ban the Retail Sales of Animals in Pet Stores in San Francisco**

## Commission of Animal Control & Welfare

Dear Supervisor **XX**,

It is the responsibility of the Commission of Animal Control and Welfare to advise the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on the broad set of animal issues within the city. Based on recent investigations and a growing body of data on the cruelty involved in the domestic and exotic pet trades, **we recommend that San Francisco adopt a city-wide ban on retail sales of animals in pet stores.**

In 2019, California passed a ban on the sale of dogs, cats and rabbits in pet stores, and while this was an incredible milestone, many species remain unprotected.

Research shows that the pet trade and breeding perpetuate cruel practices across the entire pipeline:

- [An analysis](#) of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data shows that about **30% of the animals imported for pets each year are taken directly from their wild habitats.**
- Chains such as Petco have a history of sourcing animals from [horrific pet breeding mills and animal dealers](#), where animals such as hamsters are deeply neglected, suffer from illness and even engage in cannibalism.
- Many small animals such as guinea pigs and other small mammals are abandoned after purchase, [contributing to the overflow of animals in city shelters.](#)

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San Francisco Department of Animal Care and Control

**George Han, MD, MPH**

San Francisco Department of Public Health

**Gregory Sutherland**

San Francisco Police Department

**Christopher Campbell**

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- [Many exotic pets die during transit](#) due to being held in inadequate conditions, handled improperly or other harmful actions. [One investigation](#) found that 66% of African grey parrots poached from the wild died in transit.

Building on these concerns, the vetting processes in pet stores are often unstandardized and don't match the rigor of those used by our Department of Animal Care and Control. The outcome is often that the animals don't receive proper care, diets or medical treatment. It's all too common for these animals to be abandoned in the wild or shelters or succumb to neglect.

We acknowledge that the businesses in our city are important and view our role on the Commission as balancing the needs of our animals with those of our human residents. Pet stores can and do thrive by selling supplies and providing services such as grooming. In fact, only 9 out of the 38 pet stores in San Francisco sell live animals.

Several other cities have already passed retail animal sale bans: Cambridge, MA (2017); Washington, DC (2023); Arlington, MA (2024); West Hollywood, CA (2025); Easton, PA (2025); and Radnor Township, PA (2026).

**Based on this evidence, the Commission is asking that San Francisco show its compassion and implement a full ban on the retail sale of animals.**

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Angelo Torres  
Chair, San Francisco Animal Commission –  
Commission of Animal Control and Welfare

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