

From: [Kristen Roeckle](#)
To: [Shaw, Ramya](#); [BOR_AllReps](#)
Cc: [Annie Hornish](#); [Kirstin Mende](#); [John Louizos](#); [Maria Lovello](#); [Amanda.erb@gmail.com](#); [Animals- R-Family](#); [Diane Holcombe](#); [Joshua Levin](#); [Matt Witek](#); [Jessica Barnes](#); [russell.blair@ct.gov](#); [davidmichel74@gmail.com](#)
Subject: Re: Introduction & Invitation for Discussion: Overturning Mayor Simmon's Veto of LR31.072
Date: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 9:01:08 PM

Dear Members of the Stamford Board of Representatives,

Thank you for the time, care, and seriousness you brought to discussing this issue last night. While the outcome was not what we hoped for, we remain deeply appreciative of the thoughtful dialogue, leadership, and commitment to animal welfare that so many of you demonstrated.

In particular, we want to sincerely thank:

- **Representative Pavia** for opening the conversation, engaging directly on the legal and policy nuances, and setting up the facts around the realities of puppy mills.
- **Representative Camporeale** for consistently leading with compassion and advocating for animals at every turn.
- **Representative De La Cruz** for speaking so eloquently about the milestone this vote represented and the momentum it could create beyond Stamford.
- **Representative Walston** for demonstrating what it means to truly represent the will and interests of constituents, and embodying what it means to be a public servant.
- **Representative McKeown** for carefully articulating the legal considerations, identifying areas of genuine ambiguity, and ultimately voting in alignment with ethics and moral responsibility.
- **Representative Alpine** for reaching to engage in a thoughtful dialogue, for his additions to the discussion last night, and for voting with heart.
- **Our District 1 representatives, Tom Bouchard and Steve Shore**, for your thoughtful follow-up today and continued engagement.

We are grateful to stand alongside you as we continue to move animal welfare forward in Stamford.

While this vote has concluded, Lucky Dog Refuge remains fully committed to collaboration and constructive next steps. We would like to propose a focused, two-pronged approach moving forward.

First, Lucky Dog Refuge would be honored to host and help lead a working group that includes Stamford-based rescue leaders, Stamford municipal shelter workers, and interested city legislators.

- One of the initial priorities of this group would be to **author a strong resolution to the State of Connecticut**. A city resolution serves as a formal declaration of the community's position on a state-level issue and is a meaningful way for Stamford to advocate directly to the General Assembly for action, local control, or reform.
- We testified at the state level last year and learned firsthand that success will require a more strategic, coordinated approach. Following the resolution, this working group would focus on **developing a strategy for engaging at the state level** identifying key legislators, aligning messaging, and ensuring Stamford's voice is heard clearly and consistently in Hartford.

Second, we ask for your continued support locally, as several of you indicated you would. We are participating in a peaceful protest/picketing on Bedford Street picketing this coming Sunday 1/11 at 1:00 PM. We hope we can count on you to show up. Rescues and municipal shelters manage the direct fallout from pet store sales in Stamford, particularly connected to Smart Puppies on Bedford St. If an ordinance is not the path forward at this time, we believe it is even more important to take alternative steps together to address the harm happening now.

Lucky Dog Refuge is a cornerstone of the animal rescue and animal rights community in Stamford. We look forward to working with you to represent Stamford's interests thoughtfully, strategically, and effectively at the state level, while continuing to protect animals and families here at home.

Thank you again for your leadership, your openness, and your willingness to engage.

For the Dogs,

Kristen Roeckle
On behalf of the Board of Directors

Kirstin Mende
Founder & CEO, Lucky Dog Refuge

Jessica Barnes
Executive Director, Lucky Dog Refuge

Lucky Dog Refuge
36 Pulaski Street, Stamford, Connecticut
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On Fri, Jan 2, 2026 at 11:24 AM Kristen Roeckle <kroeckle@luckydogrefuge.com> wrote:

Hi President Shaw,

I was disheartened to cancel tonight's session, but did so at your request. I followed up directly this morning with Russell Blair, Director of Education and Communications at the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission (copied here). He advised that an educational session structured for questions directed to an organization - without discussion or deliberation among Board members - would not, in itself, be prohibited under FOIA. That structure was precisely our intent. Given that guidance, the session would have been permissible. It's unfortunate that due to your request to cancel, the Board is being blocked from learning more about this issue.

We recognize that the January 5 meeting is scheduled without public comment, which is extremely disappointing given that this newly seated Board did not have the benefit of the extensive testimony, documentation, and dialogue that informed the prior Board's decision.

In lieu of any discussion, we are sharing a written executive briefing document that summarizes Lucky Dog Refuge's perspective, supporting data, and local context regarding the ordinance. The document includes references and an appendix for those who wish to review additional materials. Our hope is that this briefing helps provide some level of education and rigor that the prior Board undertook before its 35-1-1 vote.

As one former Representative (Annie Summerville) described this ordinance, it was ultimately a "no-brainer" once the facts were fully understood. We hope this material allows for that same clarity as you consider whether to override the veto.

If the Board determines that additional education would be helpful, we would welcome the opportunity to engage.

For the Dogs,

Kristen Roeckle
Board of Directors, Lucky Dog Refuge

Kirstin Mende
Founder & CEO, Lucky Dog Refuge

Jessica Barnes
Executive Director, Lucky Dog Refuge

36 Pulaski Street
Stamford, Connecticut

On Wed, Dec 31, 2025 at 2:50 PM Shaw, Ramya <RShaw@stamfordct.gov> wrote:

Hi Kristen,

Thanks for your suggestions and diligence on the below - I do genuinely appreciate your willingness to work with us - that level of engagement is crucial for all of us working to improve the city.

That said, upon further consultation with Corporation counsel we are not comfortable proceeding with either of the presented options. The second option directly conflicts with our existing board rules and legislative process that disallow public comment on items that have already been subject to a public hearing. Regarding the first option, while it seems that a series of attendance limited sessions to avoid triggering quorum, we have been guided that it circumvents the legislative and legal process of attending meetings that are not available to the wider public.

You are of course, welcome to continue to educate members of the board through the standard processes in place by providing your opinions and any information you feel would be helpful.

The board appreciates the work you do and hope you understand the board's role and our constraints as we work toward a solution. Nevertheless, I am confident this board will continue to be strongly supportive of efforts increasing the level of animal protection in whatever way we can lawfully advocate.

Wishing you and everyone a happy and healthy New Year.

Thank you,

Ramya Shaw
President - 32'nd Board of Representatives

On Dec 31, 2025, at 9:18 AM, Kristen Roeckle
<kroeckle@luckydogrefuge.com> wrote:

Hi Ramya,

Thank you for your thoughtful response and for clarifying the guidance you received from counsel.

Since your note, I spoke directly with the Freedom of Information Commission to better understand the FOIA implications you flagged. My understanding is that FOIA concerns arise if a quorum of the Board (21 members) is present for a meeting involving discussion or deliberation that has not been publicly noticed. However, an informational session without discussion, or one structured to avoid a quorum, would not raise FOIA issues.

We appreciate your diligence on this point and want to be very clear that Lucky Dog Refuge is fully committed to compliance. At the same time, given the significant public interest in this issue — including more than 170 Stamford residents who wrote in support of Ordinance LR31.072 and the prior Board's overwhelming 35–1–1 vote — we feel strongly that it is important for the newly seated Board to have a meaningful opportunity to understand why the prior vote was so decisive.

With that in mind, we would welcome your guidance on one of the following options, both of which we believe are FOIA-compliant:

Option 1: Proceed with the Friday informational sessions by dividing them into three separate drop-in meetings, ensuring that a quorum of Board members is not present on any single call - participation access will be closed before 20 representatives is reached and representatives will be asked to join a subsequent call. It will be on a first come first serve drop in basis.

Option 2: The Board of Representatives provides a dedicated opportunity for public comment or informational presentation during the upcoming Monday 1/5 Board meeting, when Ordinance LR32.008 (regarding the Mayor's veto of Ordinance 1321 / LR31.072) is already scheduled for discussion. I did not see "public comment" on the agenda for Monday.

We are very open to your perspective on which approach would be most appropriate, or whether there is another structure you would recommend that both satisfies FOIA requirements and allows for a productive, informative exchange.

Thank you again for your leadership and your willingness to engage on this. Please feel free to call me to discuss these options today - 914 954 9661.

For the Dogs,

Kristen Roeckle
Board of Directors, Lucky Dog Refuge

On Mon, Dec 29, 2025 at 5:17 PM Shaw, Ramya <RShaw@stamfordct.gov> wrote:

Hi Kristen,

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this meeting. While this is very well

intended, our Counsel has advised that such a meeting would conflict with our obligations regarding open and noticed meetings under FOIA. As such, attending this meeting is not possible for this board. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you,

Ramya Shaw
President - 32 Board of Representatives

On Dec 29, 2025, at 9:52 AM, Kristen Roeckle
<kroeckle@luckydogrefuge.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the Stamford Board of Representatives,

I wanted to follow up on my previous note. We understand that the Board has a limited window to act on the Mayor's veto of Ordinance LR31.072, so in advance of a vote which could happen as early as next week, we hope to create space for an open, constructive dialogue. Our goal is to ensure you have the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, and engage directly with those working on this issue every day as you consider overturning the Mayor's veto of the Humane Pet Store Ordinance, in alignment with the previous Board's 35-1-1 vote.

To support that dialogue, **Lucky Dog Refuge and the Humane World for Animals, will be hosting a virtual informational session for the Board of Representatives this Friday, January 2, from 4:00–7:00 PM**. The session is intentionally designed as a flexible, drop-in format to accommodate your schedules. It is intended to be an executive-level exchange, limited to members of the Board, so that you may speak freely and candidly without public pressure. At the top of each hour, we will offer a brief presentation to provide context, followed by an open discussion and Q&A driven entirely by your questions and priorities.

Lucky Dog Refuge leadership will provide a brief overview of dogs we have taken into rescue that originated from Stamford pet stores, including cases involving illness as well as situations where unprepared buyers were unable to return dogs to the store after purchase. We will share documentation showing how certain Stamford pet stores have sourced dogs from some

of the most problematic commercial breeders, and explain the downstream impact these practices create for unknowing buyers, local rescue organizations, and municipal animal control. Annie Hornish, Connecticut State Director for Humane World for Animals, will join the session to address the legal concerns cited in the Mayor's veto, explain why those concerns do not preclude municipal action, and share how similar ordinances have been successfully implemented and defended in other communities. **We will also be sending a briefing document to provide additional context ahead of the conversation.**

We truly hope you will consider joining us for this discussion. Our aim is to listen, provide clarity where helpful, and ensure you have the information you need as you evaluate the path forward on this ordinance.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, and we will follow up shortly with access details.

For the Dogs,

Kristen Roeckle, Board of Directors
Kirstin Mende, Founder & CEO
Jessica Barnes, Executive Director, Lucky Dog Refuge
[Lucky Dog Refuge is a 501c\(3\) organization located at 36 Pulaski Street in Stamford, Connecticut.](#)

In CC: Animal rights and rescue leaders of Stamford, CT including:

1. John Louizos, Board of Directors, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
2. Maria Lovello, Volunteer and Rescue Foster, [Stamford Animal Shelter Alliance](#) (Stamford resident)
3. Amanda Erb, Founder, [Hazel's House Rescue](#) (Stamford resident)
4. Diane Holcombe, Founder, [Red Leash Rescue](#) (Stamford resident)
5. Nicole Bruck, Founder, [Animals R Family](#) (Stamford resident)
6. Matthew Witek, Lucky Dog Refuge x [Stamford Run Club](#) Liaison

On Mon, Dec 8, 2025 at 11:27 AM Kristen Roeckle
<kroeckle@luckydogrefuge.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the Stamford Board of Representatives,

My name is Kristen Roeckle, and I serve on the Board of Directors of **Lucky Dog Refuge, a 501(c)(3) animal**

rescue located at 36 Pulaski Street here in Stamford.

I am writing on behalf of our Board of Directors and staff to congratulate you on joining (or continuing to serve on) this important legislative body and to introduce ourselves as partners in the work ahead. Lucky Dog Refuge operates daily within Stamford's animal welfare landscape, handling medical, cruelty, and neglect cases in our region, in partnership with other non-profit and municipal organizations such as the Stamford Animal Control and Care Center. **It was disappointing to hear that Mayor Simmons chose to veto the previous Board of Representative's 35-1-1 passing of the humane pet store ordinance this past Friday, even after an overwhelming amount of community support.**

Our goal is to facilitate open, transparent, and constructive dialogue around the opportunity to overturn the mayor's veto of Ordinance LR31.072. We want to understand your questions and priorities as you begin your due diligence on this ordinance and consider an override. The previous BoR vote reflected months of due diligence and the clear sentiment of Stamford residents, animal welfare leaders - many of whom are copied on this email and stand united in their support. This newly seated Board now has an extraordinary opportunity to consider an override in alignment with the will of constituents and the broad coalition of organizations committed to humane policy in Stamford. We hope you will give us the opportunity to share our perspective, our data, and the lived experiences of the animals and families we serve.

We plan to host a community-focused conversation on the ordinance and the future of animal welfare in Stamford in the coming days. We will reach out with details and an invitation once the details are finalized, and we would be honored to have you join us for an open discussion.

In the meantime, know that our doors are open. If any of you have questions — whether about the ordinance itself, the fallout our rescue experiences from these pet stores, our partnership with Stamford Animal Control and Care Centers, or the broader policy landscape — we would be more than happy to connect individually or as a group.

Thank you for your service to Stamford and for the time and thoughtful consideration you devote to this critical issue. We look forward to engaging with you and supporting a well-informed path forward as this Board evaluates whether to override the veto and realign with the wishes of Stamford residents.

For the Dogs,

Kristen Roeckle
Board of Directors, Lucky Dog Refuge

Kirstin Mende
Founder & CEO, Lucky Dog Refuge

Jessica Barnes
Executive Director, Lucky Dog Refuge, Stamford Resident

Supporters in Cc:

1. John Louizos, Board of Directors, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
2. Amanda Erb, Founder, Hazels House Rescue (Stamford resident)
3. Diane Holcombe, Founder, Red Leash Rescue (Stamford resident)
4. Nicole Bruck, Founder, Animals R Family (Stamford resident)
5. Maria Lovello, Volunteer and Rescue Foster, Stamford Animal Control (Stamford resident)
6. Matthew Witek, Lucky Dog Refuge x Stamford Run Club Liaison
7. Leonor Lopez, Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
8. Jen Volker Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
9. Gian Marco Montanari, Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
10. Kristina Razza, Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
11. Gabbie Volpetti, Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
12. Nicholas DiNino, Volunteer, Lucky Dog Refuge (Stamford resident)
13. Geena Chiacu, Lucky Dog Refuge Adopter (Stamford Resident)
14. Meaghan Conway, Lucky Dog Refuge Adopter (Stamford Resident)
15. Taylor Leach, Animal Advocate (Stamford Resident)
16. Lauren Marvin, Animal Advocate (Stamford Resident)
17. Rebecca Cooperman, Animal Advocate, Beagle Freedom, Lucky Dog Refuge, NYACC (Stamford resident)
18. Annie Hornish, CT State Director, Humane World for Animals
19. Joshua Levin, Legislative Advocate, CT Votes for Animals

Kristen Roeckle

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