

From: [Ashley Tranquillo](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Overturn the Veto
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 10:14:59 PM

Hi,

If you could please overturn the veto of the humane pet store ordinance, that would be wonderful!

Thank you!

Sent from my mobile device

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From: [Joan Paolucci](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Subject: Please Override the Veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 7:41:56 PM

Dear Members of the Board of Representatives,

I am a Stamford resident, and I am asking you to please override the Mayor's veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008.

I want Stamford to protect animals and families by ending the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet stores. Connecticut is a home rule state, and Stamford has the power to act.

Thank you,

Joan and Paul Paolucci

79 Harbor Dr, Apt 312
Stamford, CT 06902

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From: [Alisa Clements](#)
To: [BOR_AllReps](#)
Subject: Written testimony in opposition to LR31.072
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 6:41:26 PM
Attachments: [img-bb1a9dc7-0fc3-4156-aad1-d00fd264cac6](#)
[CT_StamfordOrdinance_AC_Oppose.pdf](#)

Dear President Sherwood and members of the Stamford Board of Representatives,

I'm emailing you, on behalf of the Pet Advocacy Network, in respectful opposition to Ordinance LR31.072. I have attached my letter outlining our concerns. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Alisa Clements

Alisa Clements

Director, Government Affairs

W: 202.452.1525 x1080 | C: 724.998.1167 | alisa@petadvocacy.org | PetAdvocacy.org



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From: [Anne Cheng](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Please Override the Veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008
Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 6:20:17 PM

Dear Members of the Board of Representatives,

I am a Stamford resident in District 7, and I am asking you to please override the Mayor's veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008.

I want Stamford to protect animals and families by ending the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet stores. Connecticut is a home rule state, and Stamford has the power to act.

Thank you,

Anne K. Cheng
MS Ed., MS Instr. Tech.
annekcheng@gmail.com



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From: [Joyce Li](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Please Override the Veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008
Date: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 7:49:01 AM

Dear Members of the Board of Representatives,

I am a Stamford resident, and I am asking you to please override the Mayor's veto of the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance LR31.072 / LR32.008.

I want Stamford to protect animals and families by ending the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet stores. Connecticut is a home rule state, and Stamford has the power to act.

Thank you,

Joyce Li

39 Bradley Pl. Stamford CT

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From: [Maureen Marchwinski](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: The Humane Pet Shop Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 11:07:51 AM

Good morning. I am writing to ask you to please override the mayor's veto of LR31.072/Ordinance 1321, the Humane Pet Shop Ordinance. Thanks to its home rule authority, Stamford can pass this ordinance. And if the ordinance is challenged in the courts, lawyers will be available to help with the city's legal defense. This ban is so very important because it would obstruct the horrible puppy mill to pet shop pipeline in Stamford by banning the retail sales of dogs and cats. Puppy mills are incredibly cruel and inhumane. Please Google puppy mills to see how heartbreaking the living conditions are at these mills. Plus places like that are not even necessary when there are so many dogs and cats patiently waiting at shelters for their forever homes. Please help Stamford become the guiding light for other communities in the state. Please override the mayor's veto! Thank you for listening.

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From: [David @ Eyes Of Steel](mailto:David@EyesOfSteel)
To: district1@stamfordctdistrict1reps.com; [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Re: District 1 Update
Date: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 12:37:25 PM

Dear Representatives Bouchard and Shore, and to the other members of the Board of Reps,

Thank you to both my reps for taking the time to explain their vote. I am sending out a response to everyone on the board as my comments are pretty much for a majority of the board.

I appreciate the seriousness with which you approached the decision. That said, I strongly disagree with both the legal premise underlying it and the institutional deference that led to this outcome.

The most concerning aspect of the Board's handling of this ordinance is the widespread confusion about the role of Corporation Counsel. Corporation Counsel works for the executive branch, not the legislative branch. Treating the Mayor's lawyers as the Board's lawyers is neither logical nor healthy for a system of checks and balances. In most functioning legislative bodies, including at the state level, the legislature either has its own counsel or seeks independent legal advice when the executive branch's position is disputed. That did not happen here.

Instead, the Board deferred to executive-branch legal advice that framed political risk as legal impossibility.

That distinction matters for all your decisions, including those on the overrides of the vetos.

A recent example illustrates why unquestioned reliance on Corporation Counsel is so problematic. When Lucky Dog Refuge invited members of the Board of Representatives to attend an informational session explaining the puppy-mill supply chain and its impact on animals and consumers, the Board President responded that Board members could not attend because doing so would constitute a violation of the Freedom of Information Act, based on advice received from Corporation Counsel. Days later, Lucky Dog Refuge sought clarification directly from the Freedom of Information Commission. An FOI educator confirmed that attending such an informational meeting, as presented, would not constitute a FOIA violation. In other words, the Board was prevented from receiving factual information on a major legislative issue based on legal advice that turned out to be plainly incorrect. This is not a matter of legal interpretation at the margins, it is a demonstrable error that materially affected legislative decision-making.

Connecticut is not a pure Dillon Rule state. Since the Home Rule Act of 1957, municipalities operate under a hybrid system in which they may exercise broad police powers unless the legislature has expressly preempted local action. In this case, no statute expressly prohibits municipalities from regulating or prohibiting the retail sale of dogs and cats. State licensing of pet shops does not, by itself, preempt municipal authority. If it did, municipalities would be unable to enact stronger local protections in countless other areas, which Stamford has done repeatedly over the years.

This is not a novel argument. Stamford has passed ordinances exceeding state minimums on plastics, pesticides, zoning, noise, environmental protections, and consumer safeguards precisely because we are not a Dillon Rule state. The suggestion that Home Rule “cannot be used” here is simply not supported by statute.

What is supported by the public record is a long pattern of interference by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. In 2019, DOAG asserted that Stamford would be “preempted” if it acted. This year, the pressure escalated to an on-the-record threat to sue the City if the ordinance were enforced. Yet DOAG has never produced a legal analysis demonstrating preemption, nor has the Attorney General issued any opinion stating that such an ordinance would be unlawful.

A threatened lawsuit is not the same as illegality. It is leverage.

It is also important to be clear about what such a lawsuit would even look like. DOAG does not suffer “damages” from a municipal ordinance. If litigation were to occur, it would almost certainly come from a private pet shop asserting economic harm, not from a state agency enforcing licensing statutes. The idea that the City would be exposed to significant financial liability simply for defending a duly enacted ordinance is, at best, speculative.

This is precisely why courts exist. When statutory interpretation is genuinely unclear, the appropriate response is not legislative paralysis, but judicial clarification. No one disputes that the final arbiter of this question would be a judge. What is troubling is that the Board declined to defend its own authority and instead accepted executive-branch caution as dispositive.

The decision last night sends an unfortunate signal that the Board views itself as subordinate to the executive branch, rather than as a co-equal body charged with exercising independent judgment. That is not what Stamford residents elect representatives to do. Representation is not limited to voting, it includes standing behind the Board’s work when it is challenged.

I urge you to reflect on what happens when the legislative branch consistently defers to executive counsel on contested legal questions. Eventually, the Board ceases to function as a meaningful check at all. At that point, the question becomes not whether an ordinance is “risky,” but whether the Board has surrendered its institutional role.

I remain convinced that this ordinance was lawful, defensible, and squarely within Stamford’s Home Rule authority. I am equally convinced that this issue will return, whether through future ordinances, court challenges, or continued public pressure. When it does, I hope the Board will be prepared to assert its independence more clearly.

Respectfully,

David Michel
Stamford CT 06902

[David Michel, Author at CT Examiner](#)

[Former Rep David Michel | Substack](#)

[National Lawyers Guild Legal Observer](#)

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On Tue, Jan 6, 2026 at 10:05 AM District 1, Stamford Board of Representatives
<district1@stamfordctdistrict1reps.com> wrote:



Tom Bouchard & Steven Shore
Board of Representatives, District 1
Stamford, Connecticut

Email: TBouchard@Stamfordct.gov SShore@Stamfordct.gov

UPDATE: PET STORE VETO

Dear District 1 Neighbors,

We wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

Many of you are receiving this email because former Representative David Watkins generously shared his constituent email list as a means of ongoing civic communication. We are grateful for his civic-mindedness, and as always, you are free to unsubscribe at any time.

As we begin our term, Stamford's Board of Representatives is confronting a contentious issue: a proposed ordinance banning the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores, and the Mayor's subsequent veto of that ordinance.

We are both long-time pet parents and strong supporters of animal welfare. We believe that the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores—and the use of puppy and kitten mills that supply them—is unethical and deeply troubling. We have heard from many residents who care passionately about the humane treatment of animals and who strongly favor overturning the Mayor's veto.

Our decision **not** to override the veto was difficult and carefully considered, and we believe our constituents deserve a clear explanation.

Under Connecticut law, the State—not municipalities—licenses and regulates pet shops. Stamford’s Office of Legal Affairs has consistently advised, dating back to 2019 and reaffirmed in 2024, that a municipal ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores is preempted by state statute. In short, local ordinances cannot conflict with state law.

Within the limits of its authority, Stamford has already taken meaningful steps to significantly restricted where pet shops that sell dogs and cats can operate through zoning and special permit approval by the Zoning Board. These measures reflect the lawful application of “Home Rule.” However, because Connecticut General Statutes require pet shops to be licensed at the state level, Home Rule cannot be used to impose an outright ban on these pet shops.

Had the veto been overridden, the city could have faced legal action for attempting to close a state-licensed business. While offers of pro bono legal support were generous and appreciated, any financial liability resulting from an adverse court ruling would ultimately fall on the City of Stamford and its taxpayers.

As unpopular as this decision may be, we believe that knowingly disregarding legal counsel and exposing the city to significant legal and financial risk is neither good governance nor in the best interests of District 1 residents.

The most effective path forward is at the state level. We strongly support efforts by our State Senators and Representatives to advance **HB 6832**, *An Act Authorizing Municipalities to Prohibit the Sale of Dogs, Cats, and Rabbits in Pet Shops*.

Thank you for staying engaged and for sharing your views.

Sincerely,

Tom & Steve

stamfordctdistrict1reps.com

888 Washington Blvd., 4th Fl., Stamford, CT 06901, USA

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From: [Nancy Newlan](#)
To: [BOR AllReps](#)
Subject: Please override the mayor's veto on LP31.072 Thank you
Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026 10:40:27 AM

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