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Pet care industry spokesperson: Store closure rebuts Cambridge Vice-Mayor’s state testimony

A national pet care association says Massachusetts lawmakers should pay close attention to [the projected closure](#) of Cambridge, Massachusetts’ Petco store. The closure comes shortly after testimony provided to the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government by Cambridge Vice-Mayor Marc McGovern in which McGovern claimed Petco planned to expand operations in the city.

“Petco’s decision to close its Cambridge store reflects the many warnings Petco, PIJAC, and other industry organizations gave to the City of Cambridge that its shelter-only store model is not workable,” said Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) Vice President of Government Affairs Robert Likins. “Petco’s letter makes clear that the Cambridge ordinance that became law in August 2017 is the sole reason for the store’s closure at the end of 2018.”

The Cambridge ordinance banned nearly all non-rescue, non-shelter sales of live animals at pet stores. Cambridge Vice-Mayor Marc McGovern [told state lawmakers in October](#) that despite the ban, he expected Petco to expand operations in the city. McGovern was testifying in favor of Senate Bill 1155 and HB 1080, and against HB 3212.

“State lawmakers should take this closure very seriously,” said Likins. “While Petco may have been planning to expand prior to the City Council’s decision, the new regulations apparently made that impossible. We believe that the Vice-Mayor was unaware of Petco’s decision, which was announced just last week, but it proves the industry’s warnings to be accurate.”

In addition to his statement about Petco, Vice-Mayor McGovern told lawmakers that Cambridge’s shelters can provide for the needs of Cambridge’s pet lovers. Likins said shelter website monitoring by PIJAC throughout 2016 “showed that there are not enough shelter animals *statewide* to meet the demands of Cambridge residents who desire to responsibly own a pet.” (PIJAC’s research is available upon request for reporters.)

SB 1155 and HB 3212 have both passed the Joint Committee. Likins said PIJAC continues to urge lawmakers to adopt HB 3212 and to reject SB 1155. “HB 3212 holds breeders, stores, shelters, and rescues accountable while ensuring pet lovers have access to the healthy pet that meets their needs,” said Likins. “This contrasts sharply with SB 1155, which is overly burdensome, risks closing some of America’s best pet stores, and fails to provide appropriate oversight of shelters and rescues.”

About the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council

Since 1970, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has protected pets, pet owners and the pet industry – promoting responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, fostering environmental stewardship, and ensuring the availability of pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers’ representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations. <http://www.pijac.org>