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Pet Industry Leaders Applaud New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman on Shutdown of Pet Flipping Operation(s)

WASHINGTON, DC – The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) enthusiastically supports the actions of New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman who, on Friday, December 13, 2013, permanently barred two pet ‘flippers’ from selling animals or becoming licensed pet dealers.

“Pet flipping is a despicable act,” says Mike Canning, president & CEO of PIJAC. “Unregulated pet sellers should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Many animals that are sold through unlicensed dealers are not well cared for, are in deplorable conditions and are never seen by a licensed veterinarian. Consumers should only, and always, purchase animals from licensed dealers who are heavily regulated and can provide legal documentation on pet origins and level of veterinary care.”

Pet “flipping” can involve the procurement of dogs through Craigslist or even by dog theft. Many dog owners who have to move or re-home their pet for various reasons often advertise their pet as “free to a good home” not fully understanding the potential danger to the animal. Pet flippers pose as individuals interested in adopting the dog for their family but, instead, turn around and sell the dog to a third party. Dogs are kept in inhumane conditions and nearly always go unseen by medical professionals. Consumers have no protections against this kind of fraud.

One seller from central New York, Carissa Seaman of Cleveland, N.Y., agreed to stop selling dogs. The attorney general said in a press conference on Friday that he got a court order to stop a separate puppy-flipping operation, run by Stephanie Arcara, near Buffalo. Neither woman had a license to sell dogs.

Last May, Schneiderman introduced his Animal Protection Initiative which includes investigating dog flipping, dog fighting and unregulated breeding facilities.

“There are laws protecting our pets, and the integrity of the industry, but it takes will and resources to enforce them,” says Canning. “We applaud the efforts of Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and hope that New York will set the example for other states to follow as we work to eliminate pet flippers and unlicensed puppy sellers.”

Canning encourages consumers to be vigilant about how they obtain a dog, whether the dog is adopted from a shelter, or purchased from a licensed breeder or pet seller.

“We intend to monitor the occurrences of pet flipping and address effective forms of legislation nationwide,” he said. “We look forward to working with state legislators, and leaders in the pet industry to develop effective, long-term repercussions for those who put both public, and animal, safety at risk.”

PIJAC addresses the issue of pet flipping on its website. For tips on how to avoid being a victim go to <http://www.pijac.org/blog/pet-flipping-avoid-becoming-victim>.

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The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) is comprised of members of the pet industry nationwide, including pet food and pet supply manufacturers, veterinarians, retailers, pet day care and boarding facilities, groomers among others. PIJAC provides its members a voice in state and national legislative issues and has supported pro-pet legislation and regulations for forty years. With over \$183 million donated in the form of food and general supplies, as well as direct monetary aid, the pet industry has helped more than 7.5 million homeless and shelter pets in the last two decades. More information can be found at www.pijac.org.