



April 9, 2026

RE: House Bill 7399

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

As the advocacy voice of the responsible pet care community, the Pet Advocacy Network represents the interests and expertise of retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, pet owners, and others involved in the many aspects of pet care across the United States. Our association promotes animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, fosters environmental stewardship, and ensures healthy pets' availability through our local, state, and federal work. In addition, we routinely advocate for legislative and regulatory proposals to protect the health, safety, and availability of companion animals.

On behalf of the responsible pet care community, we ask that you vote **YES** on House Bill 7399, which would repeal the sales tax on pet care services, making many common pet services more affordable at a time when the cost of pet care is rising across the country.

Nobody cares more about the health and safety of companion animals than we do here at the Pet Advocacy Network. We know that pets come in all shapes and sizes, from cats and dogs to lizards and guinea pigs – and each one of these cherished companion animals must be protected and cared for.

This is why we encourage you to pass this piece of critical legislation. When these taxes were enacted in 2012, constituent feedback was that these taxes created a burden on small businesses that were already struggling to survive. The tax revenue created was also just a fraction of the state's budget, bringing in roughly \$12 million. Small businesses are continuing to struggle in a post-COVID economy, and with an increasingly uncertain economic future, we should be making it not only easier for small businesses to succeed but also keep the cost of pet care from spiraling out of control.

Rhode Island and Connecticut are the only states in New England that continue to impose this tax, but Rhode Island is the only state that charges the current 7% rate. Connecticut also charges a tax on pet services; however, their consumers are only charged a rate of 6.35%. Shoppers and those seeking pet services will continue commuting to surrounding states to avoid paying a higher tax, resulting in more than just a sales tax loss for the state.

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We should be making it easier for Rhode Islanders to own and operate businesses and for families to access affordable services to care for their pets. We urge you to vote YES on HB 7399.

We appreciate your consideration and the opportunity to provide comments and input.

Sincerely,
Alisa Clements
Director, Government Affairs

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