

Age of puppies at time of sale target of law

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New Castle County Council approved legislation Tuesday that prohibits the sale or transfer of puppies until they are 7 weeks old. The law allows exceptions for puppies that have been orphaned and taken to a nonprofit animal shelter. Federally licensed research facilities are also exempt from the law.

Councilman Robert Weiner, who drafted the ordinance, and Councilman David Tackett said the measure is aimed at making breeders more responsible and protecting the welfare of animals and their owners. Weiner owns two Pomeranians and helped establish the Talley Day Bark Park. Tackett breeds and shows English bulldogs.

A violation is a misdemeanor and carries the same penalty as any violation of the county's code: \$100 for the first conviction, \$125 to \$500 for the second conviction within a year, and up to \$1,000 or 30 days in jail for the third conviction in a year. The law will be enforced by the Kent County SPCA.