

## **Montcalm County Considers Contract with Animal Dealer Animal Protection Organization Urges Commissioners to End Release of Pet Animals to Research**

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JENKINTOWN, PA—The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) is urging Montcalm County, Michigan to halt the relinquishment of animals from shelters to research, a practice called pound seizure. County Commissioners are currently considering renewing Montcalm County Animal Control's contract with R&R Research, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) licensed class B dealer. Dogs and cats given to class B dealers are then sold at high profit to research and educational facilities. There are no restrictions on the types of procedures they can be used for and many will be used in invasive and painful experiments.

Through FOIA and state open records requests, AAVS was able to obtain legal records documenting the plights of animals obtained for experimentation from shelters, including Cruella, a shepherd mix who was taken from Montcalm County Animal Control by R&R Research and sold to the University of Florida where she used in several experiments and eventually killed.

“Cruella was obviously someone's pet. She was spayed and found wearing a collar,” said AAVS Executive Director, Tracie Letterman. “She is a real life example of a lost family pet ending up in a research laboratory. People think this kind of thing does not happen anymore, but clearly, it does.”

When animals, like Cruella, are sold into research, it erodes the very core of a shelter's purpose, violating the public's trust. Surveys indicate that if a person knows pound seizure occurs, they are less likely to utilize the facility or report a stray animal. This results in increased suffering of animals who should be rescued or removed from their current situation and exacerbates an overwhelming pet overpopulation crisis.

Montcalm County is one of the four remaining Michigan counties that continues to send its relinquished or stray animals to research facilities. “We urge Montcalm County Commissioners to explore more humane options for reducing the number of homeless animals in need of shelter, including spay and neuter programs and proactive adoption policies, said AAVS Policy Analyst, Vicki Katrinak. “Sending shelter animals to research is clearly not the answer.”

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*The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) is the oldest animal advocacy and educational organization in the United States dedicated to ending experiments on animals in research, testing, and education. Founded in Philadelphia in 1883, AAVS pursues its objectives through legal and effective advocacy, education, and support of the development of non-animal alternative methods. — On the web at [aavs.org](http://aavs.org) and [BanPoundSeizure.org](http://BanPoundSeizure.org).*