



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Testimony Regarding, Proposed SB No. 499, *An Act Concerning a Pet Lemon Law* and Proposed HB No. 5493, *An Act Establishing a Dog and Cat Lemon Law*, Before the Environment Committee, February 9, 2009.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, members of the Environment Committee, my name is F. Philip Prelli. Thank you for the opportunity to be before you today to testify regarding two proposed bills on the subject of "pet lemon laws".

Complaints received by the Department from consumers regarding sick dogs and cats that they have acquired fall into two main categories: (1) cats and dogs purchased from pet stores and (2) those adopted from out of state sources. Currently there exists is a "pet lemon law", C. G. S. §22-344b (b), enforced by the Department that addresses pets sold from pet stores. This law requires refunds for or replacement of animals that are documented by a veterinarian to have an existing illness at the time of sale and provides for reimbursement of medical expenses up to \$200 (two hundred dollars) for such animals. The Department would be open to discussions regarding an increase in the reimbursement for medical expenses to a fixed level exceeding \$200 but is opposed to basing that increase on the purchase price of the animal as is proposed in Proposed H.B. No. 5493.

The second category, pets with illnesses adopted from out of state sources, is addressed with the Department's proposal, Raised Senate Bill No. 783, AAC the Importation of Animals for Adoption, that strengthens the Departments oversight of the health of animals imported for adoption.

The Department receives very few complaints from consumers that purchase dogs and cats from breeding kennels. Furthermore, breeders often provide a contract with purchasers that detail the conditions of the sale. Considering these factors, we do not see the need to implement a "pet lemon law" that applies to the sale of dogs and cats from breeders.