

March 9, 2009

Senator Edward Meyer, Co-Chairperson
Representative Richard Roy, Co-Chairperson
Connecticut General Assembly
Environment Committee
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1519

RE: SB 994 An Act Concerning Leghold Traps Public Hearing; March 9, 2009

Dear Committee Co-Chairpersons:

My name is Bruce Tolhurst. I live in the Town of Marlborough. I am writing to you regarding SB 994; An act concerning leghold traps. I am opposed to this bill.

I am not a trapper and I have never trapped. I am a homeowner. I am a camper. I am a hiker. I am an outdoorsman. I am a fisherman. In all ways I love and respect nature and the outdoors.

I wholeheartedly believe that the DEP needs the best tools available to maintain balanced populations, preclude disease "boom & bust cycles", and lessen property damage. Current laws and established regulations by DEP provide the tools necessary for proper wildlife management. To eliminate leghold traps will unnecessarily restrict the tools available to DEP to manage Connecticut's wildlife. I am strongly against eliminating the use of leghold traps.

The recent news on an owl injured by a leghold trap is distressing and certainly ended in a tragic manner. However, it is not an event supporting the elimination of leghold traps, but an emotional reaction based upon unfortunate circumstances. If a person drives a car, is speeding, under the influence of alcohol and causes an accident, we certainly would not ban all cars. If a person fishes without a license, outside of the season, and wantonly wastes the fish they catch, we wouldn't ban fishing pools. In the instance with the owl, the trap was illegal, and set in an illegal manner. Although this caused damage <tragically to the owl>, it was the act of an individual, not the trap itself. In the same manner as cars and fishing pools, we should not ban leghold traps. We must hold individuals responsible for their actions, and not legislate away our freedoms because of the actions of a very few who choose to ignore the laws we have established.

Thank you for your service and diligence in reviewing this proposed bill. I strongly urge you to reject this proposed bill.

Sincerely,


Bruce Tolhurst
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cc: Mary Ann Handley, Senator 4th District
Pamela Z. Sawyer, Representative 55th District