

**CONNECTICUT VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
TESTIMONY TO CGA EDUCATION COMMITTEE REGARDING HB 6320**

February 23, 2011

Messr's Chairmen and Members of the Education Committee:

The Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, which represents 95% of Connecticut licensed veterinarians, opposes HB06320 AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF HUMANE EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM. We have dedicated our entire professional lives to the care and well being of animals and we believe in the humane and respectful treatment of animals. We also believe that our society requires and accepts the use of animals as sources of food and fiber, as well as for scientific research, sport and entertainment.

A review of the education related web pages of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)(http://www2.asPCA.org/site/PageServer?pagename=edu_home), the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)(<http://www.humanesocietyyouth.org/>) and the Institute for Humane Education (IHI)(<http://humaneeducation.org/sections/view/mastersprogram>), reveals opposition to many lawful, human activities involving animals. Opposed activities include animal agriculture, biomedical research requiring animals, the use of animals for entertainment or sport including the circus, dog showing, dog racing, horse racing, horse showing, mushing, rodeo, fishing, hunting, wearing leather and generally any activity that uses animals to benefit humans.

Whatever ones' personal beliefs regarding the various roles of animals in human society, they are views best developed through assimilation of family and community values and adult life experience. Politically charged philosophies regarding the use of animals should not be involuntarily forced upon children and families through indoctrination by organizations with extreme agendas, incompatible with mainstream American values. These organizations should not be invited directly into public schools.

Further, we should not permit our youth to be indoctrinated with a negative view of ethnic or regional cultures elsewhere in our nation and the world. For example, the indigenous peoples of Alaska and other Native Americans hunt and trap animals for food. We should not foster intolerance of their cultures on the part of impressionable youth. Instead we should teach them to understand and respect fully, the diversity of the American experience, its history and its mix of highly varied cultures across the full spectrum of our society. "Humane Education" as its protagonists expect to teach it, would do just the opposite.

In conclusion, though it may seem unexpected that a professional society of animal caregivers would oppose a proposal to impart "humane education" to children, when the intentions of this carefully chosen phrase and proposal are explored, it should be clear why we do so. We believe decisions about the use of animals in society should be made with respect for society and its varied ethnic and regional cultures, as well as respect for human and animal life, and where appropriate, by applying science, rather than emotion to decision making about animals. So-called "humane education" represents an effort to indoctrinate youth in the ideology of animal extremism and should be rejected. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association