

Chairman Roy, Chairman Meyer and Members of the Environment Committee,

My name is Juliana Ely and I am here today to testify in support of HB 5368.

On Friday, December 10th my husband and I went to the SPCA adoption fair in Farmington, CT, where we found our little Bessie. She was very small and very thin, to the point you could see all her back bones and hip bones. She is a 1-2 year old beagle with a big heart and loved the attention my husband and I gave her from outside the pen. Although she was very thin we decided that we would take her home and give her some groceries to fatten her up. We paid the \$325.00 adoption fee and took her home.

On Monday, December 13th, I made an appointment with my vet, Higganum Vet, as I was very concerned with her health. She only weighed 12 lbs, which meant she had lost 4lbs, 1/4 her body weight from being transported from Dalton Ga. On December 8th. Her papers indicated that she was 16 lb. She had a fever of over 105, was dehydrated, anemic, and loaded with whip worms. I made a call to the vet in Georgia, to get more information and found out that Bessie had been spayed on December 7th and put on the transport vehicle on the 8th. I asked them why she was transported so quickly after her surgery and was told she had a better chance of being adopted in CT.

On Tuesday the 14th, chest x-rays were taken and was determined that she had a bad case of pneumonia, and was suggested that we take her to the 24 hour Emergency Vet in Rocky Hill as she would need 24 hour care to treat her. On Thursday the 16th, we were able to bring her home with instructions to continue breathing treatments every 4 hours for 2 weeks along with heavy doses of antibiotics, and schedule follow up visits with our vet.

I did make contact with the SPCA regarding Bessie and the gentleman I spoke with said there was nothing they could do. I had the option to take her to their vet but they were broke. He had a very defensive tone. The only thing I really wanted was to make them aware of Bessie's condition and warn them that other dogs that were in the pen with her or near her may become sick. He did tell me that they did have other sick dogs, he stated that this is not the fault of the SPCA and they go on the word of the vets or shelters where these dogs are coming from that the dogs are healthy.

It is my opinion that these animals are the SPCA's responsibility the minute they are put on the transport vehicle and should be looked at more carefully when they arrive here before being put up for adoption. If someone would have reviewed Bessie's health papers they would have noticed the weight loss and maybe caught that she was very sick. I signed a contract that I would give Bessie her forever home but on the other side of that I also signed a health care policy that states the SPCA makes every effort to insure the health of all pets prior to adoption. It is my opinion that they failed this in Bessie's case.

As of today Bessie is doing much better, she has gained weight, 7 ½ lbs, and continues to go for check ups. This has been an unexpected financial expense of just under \$2,500.00 to date for my family. I honestly believe this is a good thing the SPCA is doing however we need to make sure that this type of situation doesn't happen to other families who may not be in the position to pay these bills and go through the emotional stress of dealing with such a sick animal.

Sincerely,

Juliana Ely
47 Morris Hubbard Rd.
Higganum, CT 06441
(860) 301-2566