

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rae-Jean Davis. I am a Municipal Animal Control Officer for the Town of Stonington, CT. I have been employed as such for a period of 6 ½ years.

I am opposed to the proposed changes in Bill 5323. I believe the best way to keep the public safe from animals that may be infected by the rabies virus is to quarantine them in a facility such as a veterinarian's office, a dog pound, or a commercial kennel. At these places the quarantined dogs are observed by trained personnel and kept away from other animals.

A dog owner may overlook signs of rabies out of love for the animal. If the animal was impounded for quarantine then the dog owner was not responsible enough to keep the dog's vaccination current and/or depending on the circumstance may have allowed the dog to roam and bite somebody. How can we trust these people to now keep the animal restrained?

I also strongly oppose the section where you can order someone to send the dog to training school. I would never want the liability of telling a person that owns a potentially rabid dog to take that animal to a class full of other dogs and people and possibly expose them to rabies.

Finally I believe that this bill will only expose municipalities and Animal Control Officer's to potential lawsuits. If we let one person take their dog to training class and tell the next person they must impound at a facility we run the risk of being sued by the party that wasn't let off easy.

Responsible pet owners that keep their pet's vaccinations current and do not allow them to roam are not negatively affected by statute 22-358 as it now reads. They are protected by it though. The only people to benefit by changing it is irresponsible pet owners.

I believe the statute 22-358 should remain as is to protect the public.

Sincerely,
Animal Control Officer
Rae-Jean Davis
Stonington Animal Control
173 South Broad Street
Pawcatuck, CT 06379
860-599-4411
rdavis@stonington-ct.gov