

March 15, 2012

Members of the Environment Committee
Testimony Concerning Raised Bill 5446
Susan Kautz, R.N.
Haddam Animal Rescue

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support for Raised Bill 5446, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PAYMENT PROCEDURE FOR THE STERILIZATION AND VACCINATION OF CERTAIN DOGS AND CATS AND PROVIDING FOR ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINING.

I am a registered voter in Haddam and I am the sole volunteer / operator of Haddam Animal Rescue which is a very small dog and cat rescue. Over the past fifteen years, I have been gravely disappointed by the lack of knowledge, ethics, compassion, accountability and reliability among several Animal Control Officers (ACOs) in Connecticut whom I have been in contact with during several rescue efforts. I strongly believe that an Animal Control Officer Training program is necessary to assist in advancing a better quality and consistency of training among ACOs.

This past Fall, I was alerted to a situation in a nearby town in Connecticut where there had been a loose, scared dog (with tags and collar on) in a small patch of woods behind a gas station on a very busy road for approximately **SEVEN MONTHS**, as noted and confirmed by several local residents. They had placed many calls to the town's ACO during this time period with little to no response. He told one person that he'd tried to catch the dog but he couldn't. As cold weather was approaching, I was very concerned for this dog and called the ACO. I told him I had a have-a-heart trap and would try to catch him. I set the trap and caught the dog in one and a half days. The October snow-storm arrived a few days after her capture and buried the area where the dog had been living in snow and debris. What would have happened to this dog if I'd not rescued her? If the town's ACO had more compassion, knowledge and accountability to the residents and animals of the town, perhaps the dog would not have had to live at risk, in fear and isolation, for seven months.

I also believe that no animal should be adopted out of Animal Control Services un-spayed or un-neutered, unless deemed too old or ill by a licensed veterinarian. I urge you to support this bill that would permit ACOs to redeem State vouchers to have eligible and adoptable animals sterilized prior to adoption. In the past, far too many have been released, unaltered, and consequently more puppies were born, entering the cycle of stray/impound/euthanize. Please help stop this cycle.

Please take all necessary steps to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Susan Kautz, R.N.
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