

Written testimony of
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Friday, March 16, 2012 at 10:30 A.M. in Room 2B
CT General Assembly

Raised Bill Number 5446: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PAYMENT PROCEDURE FOR THE STERILIZATION AND VACCINATION OF CERTAIN DOGS AND CATS AND PROVIDING FOR ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINING.

Senator Myer and Representative Roy and other members of your committee, my name is Lorin Liesenfelt, President of Dog Days Adoption Events, Inc., a Non Profit Organization based in Essex, CT. I am here today to express my support of **Raised Bill Number 5446: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PAYMENT PROCEDURE FOR THE STERILIZATION AND VACCINATION OF CERTAIN DOGS AND CATS AND PROVIDING FOR ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINING.**

My organization's mission is to assist small rescue centers and municipal shelters in Connecticut and other states, to find homes for their dogs by organizing community dog adoption events. We have been supported by over 500 volunteers from around our state and because of them, have successfully managed five events in our first year of existence. During this time, we have also developed a good working relationship with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture; state rescue centers, municipal pounds and Animal Control Officers.

We encourage you to **vote in favor of this bill** for the following reasons:

(1) Training for Animal Control Officers is Essential to Public Safety

Animal Control Officers are required to uphold a mandate to protect public safety and that often involves taking animals into the care of the shelter or pound. Per recent law ACO's are now also required to actively participate in the re-homing of animals in their care by posting pictures and descriptions of animals on a publicly accessed online forum. Re-homing an animal safely and with positive, long lasting results, requires knowledge and training outlined in this bill.

(2) Municipal Pound Animals Should Be Seen By a Veterinarian

Currently within the shelter or pound environment we allow the public to view and interact with animals who are not vaccinated. The potential for harm to both people and animals is self-evident. Animals designated as "adoptable" by an ACO with proper training and who uses widely established and accepted criteria for assessments, should be prepared for potential adoption by seeing a veterinarian for required vaccinations and sterilization.

(3) State Vouchers Should Be Redeemed at Not for Profit Clinics

In order to assure that excessive costs for medical care will not be passed on to a potential adopter, vouchers should be redeemed at not-for-profit clinics or at veterinarians who agree to accept the voucher as payment in full for administering routine vaccinations and a spay/neuter surgery.

We heard testimony last week regarding the rigorous and often excessive demands for proper medical treatment required of rescue organizations bringing animals into our state yet we do not require ANY medical review or procedure for dogs adopted out through our municipal shelters. This bill will establish a higher standard of humane animal care and control for animals in our state shelter system.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.