

Testimony Concerning Raised Bill 5443
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I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the Opportunity to express my support of 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 Manchester, CT, and I am on the Board of Directors at Lydall Woods Colonial Village, a pet-friendly condominium complex, as well as a long-time volunteer for Our Companions.

With the passing of Bill 5446, we could all look forward to a new generation of animal control officers. Raised Bill 5446 would allow those who are genuinely interested in the work of animal protection to continue their education through appropriate training and become the professional, competent animal control officers that Connecticut and they themselves can be proud of.

Following are two personal experiences where my intervention may have prevented unnecessary cruelty or euthanasia:

. Walking my dog Max before work one morning, came upon an injured pit bull puppy hiding behind a shrubbery at the entrance to our condominium complex in Marlborough. I found he couldn't walk on his right hind leg, maybe dislocated. I called the local dog warden to see where I might bring the puppy and he said he would come right over and take care of the matter. When he showed up, he had dogs in a closed box in the back of his truck... I could hear them barking and asked him why they were in there... he explained they were his hunting dogs and were accustomed to traveling in that box. I questioned that, and became very concerned about the Pit Bull puppy he was taking from me. I wasn't comfortable now so I told him that I was closely tied to rescue groups and I insisted he get this dog right to an animal clinic for his leg injury and that I wanted him to keep me posted on this puppy. He knew I was going to be on top of this all the way, so he told me where he would be taking the puppy. I followed up with him and the Clinic as soon as I got to work. The Animal Clinic was wonderful and thanked me for rescuing him... his leg was dislocated and they said they would take care of him... and after further follow up, within a week, one of their clients fell in love with him and he ended up with a wonderful family.

. I met a friend for pizza in Berlin and found a disoriented, pathetic looking cat in parking lot, with a hairless tailbone. He just kept walking around meowing to anyone and everyone, seeking help, so I cut my dinner short and scooped him up and drove to a nearby animal clinic. They were just closing and, believe it or not, turned me and the cat down because they were closing and the hospital veterinarian had left. She advised to call the Police Dept since the dog warden could be reached through them. The Police actually made the call for me, but the dog warden did not call me back... it was now getting rather late, here I am out of town, getting really tired and worried about this cat,

so I decided after an hour to drive the cat directly to the Police Dept! They seemed as equally surprised that I showed up with the cat as the fact that he had not returned my call! They made contact with him again and we arranged to meet at the Animal Control Center. I checked out the cat accommodations and advised that I would be following up with him and expected this cat to be taken care of and NOT put down. The next morning, I called and spoke to another Control Officer who said she didn't think the Town would approve spending money on this cat. I insisted she make an effort, and advised her that I worked with rescue groups and that the cat should be evaluated by a veterinarian first. I guess I was persuasive enough... she did get approval from the Town to pay for the veterinarian services. The tail was amputated and the cat was later adopted out through the animal hospital. Happy ending.

My point with above examples is that I am very sure that if I wasn't persistent and personally monitored these situations, both of these animals would have been euthanized. It shouldn't be that way. As a citizen, I expect an Animal Control Officer to handle each situation professionally and with genuine animal protection in mind. Raised Bill 5446 will provide training that will improve the performance and reputation of Connecticut Animal Control Officers. As the Officers themselves grow and become more competent and educated in the handling of these animals, the citizens of our state will be more confident in putting matters in their hands and all parties will be benefit.

There are also many other pieces of this legislation that will be for the good of the Animal Control Officers, the animals in their care and the community.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

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