

## **Testimony Concerning Raised Bill 5446**

**Ms. Jennifer Colucci**

**OPIN, Inc (Outreach to Pets In Need)**

**PO Box 488, Riverside, CT 06878**

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 Stamford, CT, and also Secretary of OPIN, a 501c3 registered nonprofit organization as well as a volunteer with the Stamford Animal Care & Control facility located at 201 Magee Avenue, Stamford, CT 06902.

I have been a volunteer with the shelter since April 2003 and have watched many animals come through the shelter, be adopted into happy homes and finally end a life of birthing, thus reducing the population of homeless animals that could potentially enter the Connecticut shelter system.

Spaying and neutering every animal prior to adoption has long been a practice of the Stamford Shelter, with little additional time spent on the part of the ACO's because the shelter already makes trips to it veterinarian practice as a normal part of business. This is done efficiently and is appreciated by the adopters.

Instituting such a program within the shelter system has obvious benefits; just a few are:

1. Weeding out people who want an animal for breeding purposes.
2. Helping to educate the public in regards to the practice of altering pets.
3. An obvious reduction in homeless pet population.
4. Reducing dog bites (the majority caused by unneutered male dogs).
5. Convenience to the adopter as their pet comes to them already altered and vaccinated.

As well, I am a deep supporter of ACO Training both for the benefit of the animals and the benefit of the ACO who covers many areas of responsibility. Each ACO should be afforded adequate training in their position; training that is formalized and standardized to better prepare them for the challenges of their jobs, both in a professional and humane manner.

I urge you to support Raised Bill #5446 to better serve the animals and the people who work with them.

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

Thank you,

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