



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®**

March 6, 2012

Senator Edward Meyer, Co-Chair
Representative Richard Roy, Co-Chair
Connecticut Legislature Joint Committee on the Environment
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: American Kennel Club Concerns with Senate Bill 253

Dear Senator Meyer and Representative Roy:

Concerned dog owners in Connecticut have contacted the American Kennel Club (AKC) regarding Senate Bill 253, which seeks to repeal veterinary and public health safeguards contained in animal importations statutes approved by your committee and passed into law last year (Public Act No. 11-187). We join with our Connecticut Federation of AKC Dog clubs, the Connecticut Dog Federation, in requesting that you not approve S 253.

Established in 1884, the American Kennel Club promotes the study, breeding, exhibiting, and advancement of purebred dogs. The AKC is the world's largest not-for-profit purebred dog registry and represents 61 dog clubs in Connecticut and thousands of Connecticut voters. Historically, AKC breed clubs were among the first organizations to become involved in breed rescue. Today, through our over 150 national breed clubs, the AKC supports and encourages a national network of breed rescue activities. The AKC also supports the excellent work of many local and regional rescue groups and organizations devoted to responsible dog ownership and wellbeing of dogs.

The AKC supports the current law (11-187), in which dogs imported into Connecticut for "rescue" or resale must be examined by a licensed Connecticut veterinarian within 48 hours after importation and every 90 days before the disposition of the animal. This requirement helps to protect both public health (animal and human) and Connecticut consumers from diseases that may be borne by dogs of unknown origin.

As introduced, S. 253 eliminates these safeguards and would require only a single veterinary examination for these dogs 15 days ahead of final placement. The delay means that imported animals of unknown origin and health status could be harbored in the state for an unknown period of time – potentially jeopardizing the health of humans and other animal populations before obtaining health clearances and a final destination.

S. 253 would also alter the definition of importer to require "intent" to sell, adopt or transfer the animal after it enters the state. Unfortunately, this language creates a loophole whereby unscrupulous importers could avoid health examinations by simply requiring a paper transfer before the animals enter the state.

The American Kennel Club respectfully urges the Joint Committee on the Environment to not move S. 253 out of committee. The AKC, the Connecticut Dog Federation, and your constituent

responsible dog breeders and owners welcome the opportunity to work with you to ensure that the health and safety of human and canine residents of Connecticut can continue to be protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheila Goffe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sheila Goffe
Director, Government Relations

Cc: Members of the Joint Committee on the Environment