

Testimony Concerning SB 253
Kim Previti
Foster Home

I would like to thank the Environmental Committee for the opportunity to express my concerns on SB 253, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Animal Importation Statutes.

I am a registered voter in Durham and I foster both local and out of state dogs. I believe in rescuing a homeless dog regardless of where it originates. It is not the animal's fault that it was born in a region where spay/neuter laws are lax and pet overpopulation is a problem. There are many people in CT who want puppies or breeds that are not readily available in our local shelters and it is morally ethical to save these dogs if people want to give them a loving home. If all it requires is a short term place for them to stay I am happy to be able to provide this in order to save their lives.

I, like many other foster homes/rescue people work a full time job. With the new law, getting the dogs vetted within 48 hours of arrival has proven to be a great hardship and has greatly impacted the number of dogs that I can help. The transports typically come in on Saturday morning and, with the 48 hour stipulation; that means the dogs needs to be seen by Monday morning. I cannot always get vet appointments and take time off from work to run dogs to the vet. If they were sick, I would certainly do so, but to take a perfectly healthy dogs that was just fully vetted and vet checked 10 days prior is a huge burden.

The new law has also had a financial impact, which has been very restrictive. Vet exams can run up to \$40 depending on what vet has available appointments. To add another \$40 to the cost already incurred for altering, vaccinations, heartworm test and transport with a USDA transporter puts the costs way more than what would be reasonable to charge for an adoption fee. To add even more cost for exams every 90 days and 15 days prior to adoption makes it fiscally impossible. In order to continue saving dogs we are picking up the costs of the extra exams ourselves, but that also limits the number of dogs that we can help.

I do understand and appreciate the rationale behind the law as I have seen some "rescues" that do not have the right intentions. These irresponsible rescues are not going to comply with this law anyway. The rescue groups being impacted the most are the responsible rescues. These rescues are trying their best to comply with the burden of all these mandated exams on a shoe string budget with volunteers that work full time and have families along with the added responsibility to review applications, check vet references, do home visits, etc. The cost of each extra vet visit is equivalent to the cost of a bag of dog food. All the time spent running dogs to the vet is less time to find a dog a loving responsible home.

If the intent of the law was to make sure that dogs were sent to their adoptive homes healthy it would seem reasonable for rescues to be required to do one exam prior to adoption. This would achieve the spirit of the law and allow rescues to fulfill their overall mission, to save as many dogs as we can with the resources we have available to us.

I strongly urge you to support SB 253 so we can continue our volunteer efforts to help homeless pets and reduce the 4 million animals euthanized in our country annually, regardless of what area of the county they originate from.

Sincerely,
Kim Previti
Durham, CT