

Environmental Committee
Raised Bill No. 5323
An Act Concerning Biting Dogs

The **Connecticut Municipal Animal Control Officers Association** opposes the proposed changes to *CGS 22-358 – Quarantine of Biting Dogs*. This statute, as it currently stands, is written specifically to protect citizens and their pets from the risks of exposure to rabies. As do most states, this statute is modeled after a national standard established by the Compendium of Rabies Prevention and Control. Quarantines are the “safeguard” installed for the purpose of monitoring an animal for signs of rabies while minimizing its exposure to other animals and people. Rabies is the primary concern of an issued quarantine since the virus is considered to be fatal when passed on to another animal or human.

The proposed language of Raised Bill 5323 disregards the safety mechanism of the quarantine. It is not about the behavior of the dog (or animal), nor its propensity to bite again. Although these are significant issues, sending an animal to obedience school, a remote “country location”, an outdoor fenced area, or enforcing the use of a muzzle will not disclose whether the animal has been determined to have rabies or protect it from passing it on. If these are options “in lieu of quarantine”, there is no longer a valid means of protecting the victim involved in an animal bite incident or protecting others of a potential exposure to rabies.

Also, the proposed language of Raised Bill 5323 disregards other animals that would be included for quarantine under this statute such as cats and ferrets. Exceptions or variations, to the quarantine protocol, should not be made for a particular species.

We hope that the dangers of Raised Bill 5323 are recognized before the protective structure of the existing quarantine protocol is jeopardized. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Jones

President

CMACOA

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