

Good morning Madam Chair/Mister Chairman and members of the committee.

My name is Herb Sobanski Jr. I live at 194A Abbe Road in Enfield Connecticut.

I have been a licensed fur trapper for over 30 years.

I am also President of the Connecticut Trappers Association, Inc. representing 225 active members.

We are adamantly **OPPOSED** to **HB 5324: AN ACT CONCERNING CHILD SAFETY BY RESTRICTING THE PLACEMENT OF LEGHOLD TRAPS.**

Connecticut has one of the strictest trapping regulations in the country. These regulations dictate when and where we can place our foothold traps. Currently, any non-padded foothold trap can only be placed under the surface of water. Any padded foothold traps can be placed above ground on private land with 10 or more contiguous acres with written Landowner permission or in the borrow of a wild animal.

The use and placement of these foothold traps by fur trappers are also dictated by designated trapping seasons. The general Connecticut trapping season starts the Sunday after the first Saturday in November and runs until March 15<sup>th</sup>. Beaver season runs December 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Coyote private land trapping runs December 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Since Connecticut has these strict regulations, there is **NO** need to add any additional language that will add any unnecessary restrictions.

Since this committee's charge is to focus on the betterment of Connecticut's children by enacting new laws to protect and enhance the welfare of our children.

This Bill has no relationship or association to this charge.

From my understanding and knowledge, there has **NEVER** been a reported case of any child hurt or injured by any foothold trap placed by a licensed trapper in Connecticut.

The Bill has **NOTHING** to do with protecting Connecticut children; instead it is yet another attempt to initiate progress in the eventual ban on trapping in Connecticut.

I am appalled that this Bill was introduced under the guise of this committee, wasting valuable tax dollars and legislative time, that could have been used on the more obvious and pressing issues facing our children today. Such as drugs, gang violence, alcohol abuse, teenage suicides, internet predators, childhood obesity, and the rise in childhood autism.

Instead, a special interest group's agenda on expanding animal rights and protection was deployed within this committee that has **NOTHING** to do with children.

A child has a greater chance of being bitten by a rabid raccoon or injured by a falling tree that was girdled by a beaver, than they would be by stepping in or touching any of our legally placed foothold traps during the Connecticut trapping season. A child has a greater chance of being hit by a car walking along a public road or highway than be injured by a foothold trap. A child has a greater chance of drowning near a public boat launch than being injured by a foothold trap.

In summary, this Bill has **NO** legal or historical backing to justify its existence in any legal forum and especially not for the purpose of protecting children in Connecticut.

Let's focus on the more important issues of protecting Connecticut children and dismiss this unwarranted Bill.

Thank you,

Herb Sobanski Jr.