

Testimony Concerning HB 5836

Amy Gagnon

Volunteer, Connecticut Votes for Animals

Volunteer, Protectors of Animals

Advocate, New Britain Pound

To Members of the Environmental Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for HB 5836, An Act Concerning The Availability Of Funding For The Vaccination, Sterilization And Heart Worm Testing Of Dogs And Cats Owned By Low Income Persons Or Adopted From Municipal Or Regional Shelters. I am a registered voter in the town of Wethersfield and I am a research historian at Connecticut Humanities in Middletown.

When I am not at work, I spend a great deal of my free time advocating for animals. I volunteer at a no-kill shelter and I work with various rescue groups throughout the state helping to improve the lives of homeless, neglected, and abused animals. I have firsthand experience at numerous municipal pounds and shelters across the state, and am very familiar with the animals that find their way there. The majority of these animals are not spayed or neutered, and quite possibly have never received vaccinations. Budgets are tight in municipalities, and shelters rely on donations. I am overjoyed that the Animal Population Control Program exists, as it helps countless families and their adopted animals.

Today's economy is tough. That is a fact. Many are out of work and struggle day to day to make ends meet. One of the first sacrifices people make when trying to survive these tough economic times are their pets. Because they can longer afford them, they relinquish them to their towns or abandon them. Small non-profit organizations are popping up and much like human assistance programs, these organizations aid people's pets. They donate food and other essentials for the animals, thus allowing them to remain in the home. What a wonderful thing! And what a wonderful thing it would be to expand the ACP program, giving low income families just one more reason to be able to keep their beloved family member.

Not only would the expansion of funds help families, it would help control the animal population and keep pets healthier. This would mean fewer unwanted cats and dogs, and fewer burdens on the municipal pound system. It is a win-win situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts. Please support this important and necessary piece of legislation.

Very Sincerely,

Amy Gagnon

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