

Testimony Concerning Raised Bill 5836
Noranne Nielsen
Mansfield Animal Control Officer

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of Raised Bill, **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 Mansfield, and I am an Animal Control Officer for the town of Mansfield since 1999.

I support HB5836.

I'm a big supporter of spay/neuter. Mansfield has a mandatory cat spay neuter ordinance which is very successful. If I hear of a feral cat colony, I get in action right away, to prevent the colony from growing. Access to feral cat vouchers would be handy. I currently ask for APCP feral cat vouchers through CATS North East, Inc. which has been working fine, but the vouchers run out after only a couple of months.

There is definitely an overpopulation of pit bull type dogs in this State, which is concerning. Pit bulls are currently they most bred dog. This needs to stop. The municipal shelters are full of mostly unfixed pit bulls. Pit bull owners need all the help they can get to do the responsible thing and have their dogs fixed. I have helped several low income families in Mansfield with APCP voucher (low income) applications. I often have to help them every step of the way to make sure they follow through. It would be more efficient if I had some vouchers on hand for low income families, so I can schedule the neuter appointment and get the voucher to the local vet, as some people lose their APCP voucher before the neuter appointment. Heartworm testing needs to be done before the surgery, and has now to be paid by the dog owner, which causes a financial obstacle to get the dog fixed. If the test was included the actual use of the low income vouchers would be raised, making the program more effective.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,
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