



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Steven K. Reviczky  
Commissioner

Tel: (860) 713-2500  
Fax: (860) 713-2514

**Testimony presented to the Environment Committee of**

**The Connecticut General Assembly**

**By the Connecticut Department of Agriculture**

**January 30, 2013**

## **H.B. 5333 AN ACT REQUIRING THE BIENNIAL LICENSING OF DOGS**

**Regretfully the Department of Agriculture does not support the proposed bill. H.B. 5333 will have a negative impact on public health and safety by resulting in fewer numbers of dogs being licensed in the population that are not currently vaccinated for rabies and will not result in any savings for Connecticut's towns.**

**The justifications as cited in the proposal are not valid:**

- 1. Biennial licensing does not coincide with rabies vaccination schedules as they now exist and;**
- 2. This change will result in overall savings to the towns by reducing the cost of mailing reminders.**

**Rabies vaccinations are effective for one year after the initial inoculation and every three years on boosters thereafter. In order for this proposal to work every dog licensed in the state would need to be vaccinated in year one and either receive their inoculation yearly or every other year. Biennial licensing does not appear to easily coincide with the present regimen. An ancillary benefit to annual dog licensing is that it serves as a tool to encourage owners to keep their dogs currently vaccinated for rabies.**

**The Department believes towns will lose more income with the biennial proposal than what "reminder" mailings will cost as there will be a significant decrease in licensing compliance. Some owners currently object to the cost of dog licensing but the cost is undoubtedly less painful annually. When owners need to pay twice the amount a number of owners that would otherwise license their dogs just won't.**

**The proposal will have a fiscal impact by delaying the distribution of collected fees. Yearly town treasurers or fiscal officers, prior to July 1, transmit fifty percent of all monies received from the sale of licenses, forty percent if the town has completed a dog license survey, to the Department of Agriculture. Money collected from dog licenses support**

**municipal animal control departments, the Department of Agriculture's State Animal Control Division and the State Animal Control Division as well as the University of Connecticut which receives ten cents for every dog license issued for investigation and research concerning the cause, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of canine diseases. In addition to a drop in available funds, disruption to the current distribution formula would result in inefficiencies.**

**Consequently, H.B. 5333 will result in more burdensome administrative requirements at the state level and have a negative impact on programs within the Department, not only due to the change in the collection of funds from every year to every two years but also because of an expected decrease in total funding due to a drop in dog licensing compliance.**