Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

I am a concerned Greenwich citizen and a member of the Connecticut State Council of the Humane Society of the United States. Please accept this as my testimony (for public hearing held on 3/8/13) in **OPPOSITION to a provision within SB 1018,** AAC enforcement of environmental conservation laws. I oppose the provision that would legalize the use of snares for trapping, and ask that you KEEP SNARES ILLEGAL.

I vote, and this issue is important to me.

Why I oppose allowing the use of snares:

SNARES ARE CRUEL AND INDISCRIMINATE (NON-SELECTIVE):

- A snare is simply a wire noose attached at one end to a stake or anchor; it catches an animal either by the neck, midsection of the body, or foot. As the trapped animal struggles, the snare tightens.
- As with leghold traps, animals caught in snares often injure themselves further as they struggle. Neck/body snares strangle their victims or crush their vital organs, leading to an agonizing and often prolonged death. These traps are particularly cruel to their primary targets—coyotes and foxes—because the significant musculature around these animals' tracheas and common carotid arteries slows death.
- Audobon magazine (Sept 2002) described what snarers call "jellyheads"—snared animals with grotesquely swollen heads. From this article:**"…"jellyheads," the snarers call them.** When the snare doesn't close sufficiently, it constricts the jugular vein on the outside of the neck, cutting off blood returning to the heart; meanwhile, the carotid artery keeps pumping blood into the brain, eventually rupturing its vascular system. In a memo to his supervisor, Jakubas wrote: "I think it is also safe to say that [this] is an unpleasant death. Anyone who has had a migraine knows what it feels like to have swollen blood vessels in the head. To have blood vessels burst because of pressure must be excruciating." See article at: See article at: http://audubonmagazine.org/incite/incite0209.html.
- For animals that survive, pressure from the wire ligature can damage cellular structures, which in turn can lead to necrosis of tissues (pressure necrosis) and ultimately death in the days following release.
- Snares are indiscriminate--non-target species can suffer in these devices. These snares cannot distinguish between coyotes and domestic dogs.

WRONG APPROACH: Trapping and killing coyotes doesn't resolve problems, as a number of communities that tried lethal control have found out. Coyotes from the surrounding area quickly replace those removed. Coyotes also have an adaptive reproductive response when hunted or trapped – they breed earlier, have larger litters, etc. – and their numbers quickly rebound, even when a large percentage of their population is removed. In one study, even after as much as 75% of the population was removed, coyote numbers rebounded back to pre-removal levels in a mere 8 months (E. Gese, 2005).

BETTER SOLUTIONS: Most problematic coyote behavior can be changed, long-term, by removing food attractants, "hazing" coyotes who have become too human-habituated or bold, using appropriate dog fencing, and not allowing pets to free-roam/ be unsupervised.

I oppose the use of the "Collarum" or any similar device. Contrary to its marketing claims, this product is NOT humane, and it is INDISCRIMINATE.

INHUMANE: The Collarum website (collarum.com) states that in a study, "70% of the coyotes caught showed no significant damage." But what about the other 30%? How badly were they injured? And what is considered a "significant" injury? This could potentially include common injuries seen in snaring and trapping including lacerations in skin, injuries to tendons and muscles, and broken teeth. The mouth-activated nature of this device raises the spectre of mouth and muzzle injuries, which could be life threatening. This same website stated that "most dogs and foxes sustain substantially less damage because they fight less than coyotes" – however a panicked or high-strung dog could seriously injure himself, and a thick-necked breed could have less or no slack in the noose.

NON-SELECTIVE: These snares have a mouth-activated, pull-back mechanism which is designed to capture canines. Yet these snares cannot distinguish between a dog and a coyote. Domestic dogs are certainly at risk of being ensnared where these devices are used, and in fact Collarum snares are marketed to catch dogs as well. (see http://www.collarum.com/parts.htm)

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me (information below) with any questions or for discussion.

Yours truly,

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