Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 5566, An Act Concerning Child Safety by Restricting the Placement of Leghold Traps

Dear Representative Urban, Senator Bartolomeo, and Honorable Members of the Children Committee:

I am writing in SUPPORT of HB 5566, which would restrict the placement of leghold traps.

I am a registered voter in East Berlin, Connecticut, and this bill is important to me.

I honestly find it hard to believe that these barbaric traps are still allowed to be used. They are cruel, traps, are non-selective, posing a danger to children and companion animals alike. The leghold trap often causes significant and hideous injuries, during the initial snap and/or as the animal attempts to become free while in a panicked state. The indiscriminate nature of this device is evidenced by numerous accounts reported every year of unintended ("non-target") animals caught in these traps. These are just the cases that are brought to the media—the true number, as you can imagine, is likely far higher. I applaud the provision in this bill that requires trappers to report non-target catches (such as pets) to DEEP.

I ask that you add a provision to include body-crushing traps, also known as conibear traps. Although meant to kill animals by breaking their spines, body-crushing traps only do so when the target animal enters the trap perfectly – conditions very difficult to control in nature. When not killed outright, these traps cause immense suffering. Body-crushing traps pose an extreme safety risk to curious pets and children alike, due to the force with which they slam shut and the amount of damage that they can do.

The State of Connecticut should neither be condoning such cruelty nor putting our children and companion animals at such unnecessary risk. Precedent exists in eight states that restrict or ban the use of leghold and body-crushing traps: Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington, Arizona, California, Colorado, and Florida. I beg you to add Connecticut to the list.

I thank you for holding a public hearing on this important matter, and ask that when it comes up for your voting consideration, that you vote in SUPPORT of HB5566.

Yours truly,
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