Testimony of Neil Hornish
In SUPPORT of HB 6329
AAC Dissection Choice
Public hearing testimony for February 21, 2013

Dear Honorable Members of the Children's Committee (Sen. Bartolomeo, Rep. Urban, Sen. Duff, Rep. Fawcett, Sen. Linares, Rep. Betts, Rep. Ayala, Rep. Candelaria, Rep. Hewett, Rep. Hoydick, Rep. Vargas, and Rep. Wood),

I would like to take this opportunity to express my **Support** for **HB6329**, An Act Concerning Dissection Choice.

As the cofounder of the humane education organization The Compassionate Living Project, I have met many students across the state who are looking for ways to put their concerns for the humane treatment of animals and respect for the natural world into practice. One topic that frequently arises is dissection in the classroom, and it has become apparent to me that many students have ethical objections to dissection.

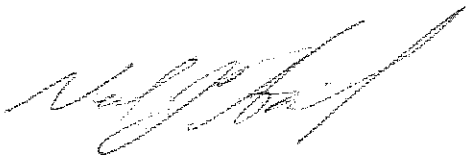
This bill would have multiple benefits. It would allow students to adhere to their ethical standards in the classroom. It has been shown that model-based techniques provide equal or better teaching results than animal dissections. The cost to the school science departments would be reduced. The models used in dissection alternatives, such as lifelike models and computer programs, can be reused from class to class and year to year, and can often be obtained at low or no cost. The risk to students from sharp instruments and formaldehyde is removed, and the teacher's set-up and clean-up time are reduced.

This bill would not eliminate the biology curriculum requirements, but would allow these requirements to be realized in an alternate manner.

Both the National Teachers Association and the National Association of Biology Teachers recognize the efficacy of model replacements to animal dissection and encourage alternatives for students who have objections to dissection. For students considering careers in medical or veterinary fields, no medical or veterinary school includes high school dissection as a prerequisite for entry, and most medical schools have eliminated the use of animals in their classrooms.

Connecticut is currently in need of highly trained individuals in many fields, including medicine and biology. No student should be discouraged from pursuing an education in science because they feel they may be forced to violate their ethical beliefs. In fact, it is precisely those individuals who adhere to high ethical standards that Connecticut should be encouraging to enter the life sciences.

Thank You,



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