



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Commissioner*



**Testimony presented to the Environment Committee of
The Connecticut General Assembly
By the Connecticut Department of Agriculture
March 15, 2013**

**H. B. 5844 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE OVERNIGHT TETHERING OF DOGS
OUTDOORS AND THE TETHERING OF DOGS OUTDOORS UNDER CERTAIN
WEATHER CONDITIONS**

Chairmen Meyer and Gentile, Vice Chairs Maynard and Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban and members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

The intentions of the proponents of H. B. 5844 are noble, however once again efforts to find language that can be reasonably enforced remain elusive.

While an attempt is made in Section 1(a) of the bill to define a "hazard," many instances are in fact undefinable.

Section 1(c) of the bill attempts to apply temperature standards to a wide array of dogs that have different temperature tolerances. We can all agree that no dog should be tethered or left without proper shelter; however different breeds of dogs may acclimate to different temperatures. A Husky will tolerate conditions well below freezing and will revel in cold temperatures but a short haired dog will not and the reverse is true as well. The short haired dog will tolerate warmer temperatures that the Husky may find uncomfortable.

When attempting to find language suitable to the proponent's goals, consideration should be given to indices that consider humidity during the summer and wind chill factors in the winter. A 90 degree summer day with low humidity is more tolerable than an 85 degree day with high humidity. In the winter, the same principle applies with wind chill.

Connecticut's animal cruelty law (53-247a) states, "... Any person who ...deprives of necessary sustenance...fails to give such animal proper care or neglects to cage or restrain any such animal from doing injury to itself or to another animal or fails to supply any such animal with wholesome air, food and water, or ...or fails to provide it with proper food, drink or protection from the weather ...shall, for a first offense, be fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than one year or both, and for each subsequent offense, shall be fined not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years or both."

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture supports the intention of the bill and believes that the Animal Cruelty statute as written is still the best language to apply in tethering situations.