STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

CONNECTICUT GROWN

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

February 11, 2013

H.B. 6315 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESALE OF DOGS TO MILITARY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

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 testify today.

This proposed legislation will remove barriers preventing the military and law enforcement agencies from obtaining certain types of dogs for training purposes.

Most dogs trained in Connecticut for exclusive use in military or law enforcement work are imported by trainers into Connecticut from Europe. Currently, Connecticut law restricts from sale any dog that is not born and raised on the premises unless the seller possesses a pet shop license. (CGS Sections 22-327(9) and 22-344e).

Presently, Connecticut pet shops must purchase any out-of-state dogs from a USDA registered breeder or broker. Because these working dogs are imported from Europe, trainers do not comply with Connecticut law. This proposed change in the statute would exempt dog trainers who sell dogs to the military or law enforcement agencies from having to procure a pet shop license.

The intent of the USDA requirement in the current statute is to ensure pet shops purchasing puppies for resale from outside of Connecticut are purchasing the puppies from USDA regulated breeders and brokers and not "puppy mills". The dogs imported from Europe for law enforcement or military use are adult dogs with exquisite bloodlines and travel with a health passport.

By exempting these trainers from the current statute, it would allow law enforcement agencies to purchase dogs from Connecticut trainers and maintain business within the state. The change would also allow other law enforcement agencies and military branches from outside of Connecticut to purchase their working dogs from Connecticut businesses.

Thank you for your time today and for your thoughtful consideration of this testimony. Please let us know if we can provide any additional information that would be helpful.