

Testimony Concerning SB 445
Alecia Bohan

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of SB 445 .

I am a registered voter in Burlington and a lifelong resident of Connecticut.

Dogs are known as man's best friend and for good reason. All of us can think of at numerous examples where a dog has saved the day, provided someone with a smile or companion, or just made a person feel special and loved. I recall with fondness how my grandfather who is now passed lit up when we brought our dog over, and how the two of them became best buddies as they aged together, cuddling with one another on my grandpa's favorite recliner. Dogs are special, and we have an amazing opportunity to ensure that Connecticut becomes the first state to stand up and say "we will not condone the inhumane treatment that is an inherent part of puppy mills." Yes, other cities such as Chicago have passed such a ban on pet stores with puppy mill ties, but to be the first state would be something to really be proud of.

While I have not bought a dog from a pet store, my sister in law whom I was living with at the time did. It was an adorable, irresistible tiny Yorkshire terrier who she named Tinkerbelle. Shortly after bringing Tinkerbelle home, we noticed the cute puppy had a not so cute cough. Kennel cough was the diagnosis, and in spite of the fact my sister in law was already head over heels for her new best friend, we could not let the puppy stay in the house. She ended up reluctantly and sadly giving Tinkerbelle to a friend since we could not risk the sickness being passed on to the other dogs or the young children in the household. Because kennel cough is so highly contagious, it is quite likely that every other dog in the pet store at that time had it as well, and other people were also faced with a decision to make about how to care for their new sweet but also sick companion.

Thus, while I love animals and dogs, I do truly believe that passing this bill benefits people as well. Fewer animal lovers will unknowingly support animal cruelty and fewer people who probably are already trying to save money will have to pay increasingly expensive veterinarian bills as a result of buying dogs with illnesses. I also believe that pet stores that do not sell commercially bred animals will benefit financially since more and more people are looking to avoid supporting businesses with ties to puppy mills. I know that all my friends and family would not even a bottle of fish food from a pet store where puppies are sold. In conclusion, this bill is beneficial to many.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way it's animals are treated." Let's show everyone just how great Connecticut is by being the very first state to declare that we do not support the cruelty that is a part of commercially breeding dogs in puppy mills.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Alecia Bohan, Burlington, CT

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