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Testimony Regarding

Raised Bill 1094

An Act Concerning Assault with Enhanced Penalties

made March 20, 2015 to the

Judiciary Committee

The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) **strongly supports** Section 2 of **Raised Senate Bill 1094** to include animal control officers in the list of persons covered as victims in the case of an assault as a class C felony. We urge the members of the Judiciary Committee to give this bill favorable consideration.

NECCOG has operated the largest regional animal control program in Connecticut for the past eleven years. Our officers (they are not armed) find themselves in dangerous situations on a routine basis. Added to this is the reality that we are dealing with peoples pets — which often adds an emotional element to our interactions with people during our investigations. We investigate approximately 350 incidents a year.

We believe, as proposed in Raised Bill 1094, that it is reasonable and appropriate to include animal control officers with police officers, fire fighters, probation officers and others that serve the public and place themselves in potentially dangerous situations to serve public health and welfare. The assault of an animal control officer doing their job is not acceptable and there should be a consequence of significance. Raised Bill 1094 corrects this current efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. Should you want more information or comment, please contact: John Filchak, NECCOG Executive Director at john.filchak@neccog.org