

**Testimony Concerning [HB 6187](#) and [SB 1128](#)**  
April 1, 2015

**Elizabeth M. DiLernia**

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my support of [HB 6187](#) and [SB 1128](#) which would assign an animal advocate in cases of animal abuse (HB 6187) and to end accelerated rehab for animal abusers (SB 1128)

I am deeply concerned with animal welfare and believe that animal abuse needs to be addressed more consistently and fairly in Connecticut. I have been involved in animal rescue for many years and have seen terrible cases of neglect and abuse. All too often, animal abusers walk away with nothing more than a slap on the wrist, which equates to a minor inconvenience in their life. Studies repeatedly show that animal abuse is commonly a precursor to more violent crimes against people later in life. Animal abusers must not be let off so easily.

The first step is to have an animal advocate who will volunteer their time, launch an independent investigation of the cruelty case, and present findings to the court. An advocate can speak to the gravity and seriousness of the crime, and emphasize the connection between cruelty to animals and cruelty to humans.

Next, we must ensure that all animal abusers are justly punished for their crime. Accelerated rehabilitation has been proven time and time again not to work, and essentially leaves the public in danger of further violence from this individual.

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

Thank you,

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