

March 19, 2015

From: Sherry Wernicke, Connecticut State Council, The Humane Society of the United States

Re:

SUPPORT SB 361 that would increase penalties for animal cruelty, with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in CT.

OPPOSE HB 6043 that would allow Sunday hunting.

SUPPORT HB 5707 the Beagle Freedom Bill regarding outdoor sheltering for dogs.

Dear Co-chair Kennedy, Co-chair Albis, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Please accept this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 361** with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in the State of Connecticut.

I support increasing the penalties for malicious and intentional animal cruelty and ask that you add language to SB 361 that would prevent gestation crates from coming to Connecticut. The intensive confinement of farm animals is already here in Connecticut – chickens confined in tiny cages at KofKoff Egg Farms in eastern CT -- and I don't want to see further expansion of these types of cruel farming practices.

A law preventing gestation crates will promote best practices that our local, sustainable farmers already follow; protect our family farmers by preventing out-of-state factory farms from coming to Connecticut; and will follow the wishes of 91% of Connecticut voters who want a ban on gestation crates. Nine states have already passed legislation outlawing these crates and Connecticut should follow their lead. In addition, Smithfield Foods and Cargill, large pig producers have

already announced that they will end the confinement of sows in gestation crates and many major corporations, such as McDonald's and Burger King have announced they will end gestation crate use in their supply chains.

Additionally, I **OPPOSE HB 6034** that would allow Sunday hunting, because I believe bow hunting is horribly inhumane and I believe the residents of this state deserve one day when they can enjoy our great outdoors without fear of being injured from a stray arrow.

Finally, I **SUPPORT HB 5707**, which would provide adoption opportunities for dogs and cats used in certain experiments and which would define outdoor sheltering standards for dogs. Even though our cruelty laws require "shelter" there are no statutory guidelines to specify what this means. Dogs have been found huddled under tarps, wading through wet dog houses, forced to stand on wire floors, and sleeping without any bedding. This bill would define humane standards for providing shelter for dogs.

In addition, it would require that research labs in publicly funded higher education facilities adopt out dogs and cats to a loving family once they are no longer needed for research purposes. There are currently no laws governing the fate of dogs and cats when they have completed their time in laboratories. When these animals have sacrificed so much for humankind, don't they deserve a comfortable "retirement"?

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Wernicke
Riverside, CT 06878