

**TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF RAISED BILL No. 7011
AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS IN
COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES.**

Environment Committee

March 20, 2015

I am Richard Mellin, Mellin & Associates LLC, a property management firm based in Redding, CT serving the great Danbury area. My partner and I manage large condominiums with almost one thousand units. We have been managing community association properties for 30 years.

Mellin & Associates LLC is a proud member of the Connecticut Chapter of Community Associations Institute. I serve on the organization's Legislative Action Committee and Chair the organization's Managers Council and that represents our community association managers.

The purpose of this bill is to clarify provisions of Chapter 435 of the Connecticut General Statutes that were originally drafted in a way that do not fully address problems of animals on the common elements of a common interest community (i.e. condominium or home owners association).

In 1975, the Connecticut Attorney General issued an opinion in which he concluded that animal control officers have no authority regarding a dog of a condominium unit owner that is roaming loose on the common elements because the unit owner shares an ownership interest in the common elements. While this opinion is technically correct, the result is dramatically contrary to public safety. Bill 7011 would empower the local animal control office (AMC) to enter into a common interest community to catch a dog or cat that was "roaming" loose.

When this section of the statutes originally went into effect in 1925, the concept of a common interest community did not exist. Today, public safety is a major concern for the tens of thousands of individuals who live in a common interest community and for the owners of the thousands of dogs that reside in those communities. They want the local AMC to be able to impact the incidents of dogs that are allowed to roam freely off a leash that could result in harm to the roaming dog, other dogs, or a resident.

The AMC's in the Danbury area towns are very dedicated and professional individuals who care about the safety and well being of the cats and dogs located within condominium communities. I am in favor of Bill 7011 because it will allow AMC's to perform the tasks that they are chartered to do in the communities they serve. Bill 7011 will not add any additional burden or increased cost and will allow AMC's to enforce public safety pet concerns in the common areas of common interest communities.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Richard E. Mellin
Mellin & Associates LLC
P. O. Box 1115
Redding, CT 06875
203-938-3172
Rich@Mellin.us