

# The Humane Commission

City of New Haven, Connecticut

---

New Haven City Hall  
165 Church Street  
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

**Commissioners:**

Mark Bailey, *Chair*

Dagmar Moore

Sarah Morocco

Anushree Shirali

Cynthia Crooker, *designate*

Robin Johnson, *designate*

Ex Officio: *Chief of Police*

## **Resolution and Remarks in Support of Connecticut H.B. 5361**

Thank you for providing this opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Mark Bailey. I am a commissioner with the Connecticut State Task Force on the Humane Treatment of Animals in Municipal and Regional Shelters, as well as the chairman of the City of New Haven Humane Commission. And it is primarily on behalf of the latter that I am here.

The City of New Haven Humane Commission, representing the second largest municipality in Connecticut, is listed and described in section 7-17 under Title III of the New Haven General Code of Ordinances. New Haven's humane commission provides animal welfare oversight, including the authority to adopt such rules and regulations that in its judgment are required for the operation of the animal shelter and related activities, and for the proper care and treatment of animals within the city limits. Speaking for the commission regarding the issue of H.B. 5361, I wish to read for you the following statement and resolution, which was approved by vote on February 9, 2015:

It is a common occurrence and frequent concern throughout New Haven, Connecticut, that some dog owners feel pressured or forced to give up their pets, or not adopt a deserving companion animal in need of a home, because of the owners' inability to qualify for affordable insurance coverage to protect themselves and their households. This is due to a profound misunderstanding about the nature of dog type and breed. Faced with the overwhelming ultimatum of having to relocate or comply, families often surrender their beloved pets to overcrowded animal shelters, causing heartbreak for the family and an uncertain outcome for an innocent pet.

Research on animal behavior reveals that the humane treatment, care, and training of a dog supersedes any predominant characteristic assigned or misattributed to breed. Some types of dogs disfavored by insurance companies actually rate extremely high in terms of compatibility, as is supported throughout New Haven in the numerous positive examples of these animals in day to day life.

Moreover, we live in a state that has made breed specific legislation illegal. It is therefore incongruous and inconsistent with the legal and ethical position of the state to allow certain insurance companies to discriminate against people/families and their pets because of the breed or type of dog in the household, or against those who wish to adopt and provide a home for a certain type of companion animal.

Therefore, by resolution, the Humane Commission of the City of New Haven stands in full support of Connecticut House Bill 5361 to limit the use of breed of dog as an underwriting factor for homeowners and tenants insurance policies. [End of resolution]

Thank you again for this opportunity to present this resolution in person to you today.