

**Testimony Concerning Bill 5361**  
**Committee on Insurance and Real Estate**  
**February 10, 2015**  
**Renée Healion**

I thank the committee for considering my brief remarks in support of **Bill 5361**, *An Act Concerning the Use of Breed of Dog as an Underwriting Factor for Homeowners and Tenants Insurance Policies*.

Dogs, especially those casually described as “pit bulls”, fill shelters, pounds and sanctuaries in Connecticut towns. When these facilities are at capacity, dogs are placed in other locations. The numbers are growing.

Connecticut citizens are compassionate and have consistently supported policies which greatly limit euthanasia in such facilities, whether by affirmation or practice. This adds to the population pressure.

State residents are willing to adopt dogs but, whether homeowner or tenant, they are stymied by insurers’ proscriptions against numerous specific breeds or vague category. As a consequence, dogs languish indefinitely.

This outcome is not the preference of the citizenry. At this point, it is a bottleneck that is the direct result of the insurers’ overly broad proscriptions. Dogs will continue to be warehoused indefinitely unless this impediment to the adoption of these dogs by willing persons is removed.

On a personal note, I would ask, if this bill is not enacted as law and current conditions continue, that a member of the Legislature initiates an action to allocate funds to allow for close inspection of alternate warehouse locations.

The happiest and most cost-effective approach would be to facilitate adoption which is the intent of this bill.

Please support this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Renée Healion  
Windham, CT