

Testimony Concerning HB 6187
Judiciary Committee April 1, 2015
Amy G. Gagnon

Good afternoon Chairman Coleman and Chairman Tong and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am writing today to express my support of HB 6187 An Act Concerning the Protection of Animals that are the Subject of Criminal Court Proceedings. (“Desmond’s Law”).

Some might think having a person designated to an animal who is abused or the subject of a cruelty case in a court setting strange, or even futile. I believe quite the opposite. Sadly, many animals suffer tremendous abuse at the hands of humans and it is up to us to help give them a voice. As we move forward into the 21st century I am seeing that as a society we are more cognizant of animal welfare, humane treatment of animals, and the role animals play in our everyday lives. They have earned, and deserve, a human voice representing them when they are abused and mistreated.

I have worked in animal rescue for a few years now and I have seen the unspeakable. Animals so neglected they are near death; dogs starved to emaciation; cats so abused the only humane thing to do is to euthanize them. The police in my city (New Britain) have taken a proactive stance on animal abusers by identifying abusive situations and pressing charges against the abusers. For that I am grateful, but what if these cases were more complex? What if they headed to court? There would need to be a court advocate to speak for the abused, and this is where HB 6187 is essential and needed.

While things across our country are looking better for companion animals, and there are larger numbers of advocates than there were a few years ago, we still have a long way to go. The passage of HB 6187 would be an important part of the upward movement so desperately needed to reach a more humane and just future for animals.

Today, I urge you to support this important piece of legislation. If passed, Connecticut can and will act as an example and lead the way for other states to follow suit.

Thank you again for your time today,

Amy G. Gagnon
New Britain, Connecticut