

Testimony in support of H.B. 6187 & S.B. 1128

Valerie J. Morrell, Guilford, CT

I would like to thank the distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to express my personal support of H.B. 6187 & S.B.1128.

I am a constituent in the 98th, and 3rd districts, respectively, residing in Guilford, Connecticut.

I am an extremely active volunteer with my rescue, Save One Soul Animal Rescue League. I see cases everyday of animals that are mistreated and unloved. This is just one of the many reasons why it is important for me to be able to share my thoughts with you today as to why I feel it is important to pass both of these humane measures to protect the welfare of animals.

With respect to H.B. 6187, I feel it is only just to appoint a court advocate in the case of animal cruelty. There is no one to represent the defenseless in these cases, and from what I understand there are law students in our universities that would gladly respond to and represent them on these issues. A court advocate can not only represent the animal, but also speak to the nature and social significance of the abuse and the link between people charged with animal cruelty and other violent behaviors.

With respect to S.B. 1128, I feel it is not relevant to offer a diversionary practice such as accelerated rehabilitation in the case of animal cruelty. This type of procedure is generally used in non violent crimes that are not of a serious nature. To allow accelerated rehabilitation and expungement of records to continue in the torture, death, or inhumane treatment of a living creature should be intolerable. The use of this procedure rarely results in adequate penalties.

I appeal to all of you today to please support H.B. 6187, Court Advocacy for Animals, and S.B. 1128, Prohibiting Accelerated Rehabilitation in Animal Cruelty Cases.

I thank you so much for the opportunity to submit testimony today on behalf of the voiceless, and those in the community who truly care about animal welfare.

Truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Valerie J. Morrell', written in black ink.

Valerie J. Morrell