

**Elizabeth J. Herlihy**

4 flat rock road extension, branford, ct 06405

[elizabeth.j.herlihy@snet.net](mailto:elizabeth.j.herlihy@snet.net)

(203) 481-9997

March 31, 2015

Dear Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to ask your support of the following bills that will be considered by the Judiciary Committee this coming Wednesday, April 1, 2015.

So many of us were disappointed in the lack of justice in the case of poor Desmond the dog. Desmond was a shelter rescue dog who was beaten, tortured and strangled to death by his owner, who received only 2 years of accelerated rehabilitation, and in a couple of weeks will have his record expunged. This was not his first animal abuse case, and in fact, the dog was taken from him previously due to neglect and abuse. Unfortunately, he was able to get the dog back and the result was horrific. There was no justice for Desmond during that trial, but we can only hope to change the current laws to prevent future abusers from getting off pretty much scott-free. These animals cannot speak for themselves, and as a society we cannot tolerate abuse of those that are defenseless. I will not go off on a tangent as to the correlation between abuse of pets and the abuse of children and others, but it merits mentioning.

I strongly encourage you to vote for these two bills, and hope that it prevents me from ever having to write to you regarding this topic again.

HB 6187 would establish a system to provide an abused animal with a designated individual who will communicate the animal's interests in cruelty cases. The court advocate would volunteer their time, launch an independent investigation of the cruelty case, and present findings to the court. An advocate can speak to the gravity and seriousness of the crime, and emphasize the connection between cruelty to animals and cruelty to humans.

SB 1128 would eliminate Accelerated Rehab as a penalty option in animal cruelty cases.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth J. Herlihy