



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES

February 19, 2016

Environment Committee  
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 240-0440

Re: **SUPPORT HB 5147 (increases penalties for certain types of animal cruelty)**  
**AND**  
**OPPOSE HB 5151 (negatively impacts community cats and their caregivers)**

Dear Co-Chair Kennedy, Co-Chair Albis, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut-based supporters of The Humane Society of the United States, the largest animal protection organization in the country, and in furtherance of improving the welfare of animals, please:

SUPPORT [H.B. No. 5147](#), as it would raise the maximum penalty for persons convicted of subsequent offenses of malicious and intentional animal cruelty; and

OPPOSE [H.B. No. 5151](#), as it would negatively impact community cat caregivers (i.e., those who care for ferals, strays) in common interest communities. Requiring the impoundment of cats found to be causing damage and penalizing those who do not comply can put many community cat caregivers between a rock and a hard place, resulting in overcrowded conditions and stretched resources at animal control agencies and shelters, as well as missed opportunities for meaningful community engagement.

On the other hand, laws and ordinances that focus on incentivizing spay/neuter and humane management programs for community cats can be more effective at reducing pet overpopulation and nuisance issues in most communities. Rather than penalizing these caregivers, and stretching the already strapped animal care infrastructure, emphasis should instead be placed on behavioral support and other proactive solutions to address nuisance and damage issues.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

**Annie Hornish**

Connecticut Senior State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States

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