



**FOR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY OF RIVERS ALLIANCE OF CONNECTICUT
February 24, 2016**

RE: RB 5315

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVENTION OF THE HABITUATION OF
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMALS, THE POSTING OF INFORMATIONAL
NOTICES CONCERNING ENCOUNTERS WITH WILDLIFE AND THE STATUS OF
SNAPPING TURTLES UNDER STATE LAW.**

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is a statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.

To: Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr. and Rep. James Albis, Chairmen; and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Rivers Alliance asks that the prohibitions concerning the sale and exchange of certain wild animals be extended to include snapping turtles. This would provide snapping turtles with the same protections concerning their purchase, sale, or exchange as other reptiles currently have.

Today, biologists understand the critical role these species play in maintaining biodiversity and the health of our ecosystems. There is also abundant scientific evidence to prove that snapping turtles cannot be sustainably harvested from the wild. There is economic incentive to take snapping turtles from the wild due to the ever increasing demand from Asian markets. Surrounding states have banned commercial harvest, making Connecticut's turtles even more vulnerable. The statute needs to be updated to reflect Connecticut's responsible, fact-based conservation ideology. Extending the protection to snapping turtles would be a good thing.

We hope you will support Raised Bill 5315 and help give snapping turtles legal equality.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Miner".

Margaret Miner, Executive Director
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