

Committee Members,

My name is Brian Gay. I live in East Hampton. My elected officials are Rep. Ziobron and Sen. Linares.

I am writing to express my support for HB5443 and to ask you to please support this bill so that it may succeed.

My partner's family has a beloved dog (Buster) which he grew up with. Buster has provided essential companionship to my partner's father and immeasurable joy to my partner and his siblings as they have grown up. I also have benefited from knowing Buster and can't imagine him not being a part of the family. I should mention that Buster is a mixed breed, but most people would consider him a pit bull type based on his appearance.

In addition to my personal investment in the outcome, I also find the following information compelling for support of HB5443:

- Connecticut has already enacted a law prohibiting municipalities from adopting breed-specific ordinances. (2013, Public Act 13-103). This Act indicates that the legislature believes breed discrimination is not good policy. Therefore, it makes sense to ensure that insurance companies may not participate in breed discrimination either.
- A [2014 position paper](#) released by the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior highlights that dog breed is not a reliable indicator of a dog's potential for aggression.

"Any dog may bite, regardless of the dog's size or sex, or reported breed or mix of breeds." Dog bites are usually due to upbringing, learned behavior, fear, and lack of socialization (e.g. dogs kept as backyard "guard dogs").

Dog bite statistics that point to certain breeds are unreliable because, given so many dog mixes, it's often difficult to determine breed. "Identification is often made by neighbors, public officials, law enforcement, reporters, etc.—not necessarily by people who work with animals—and even those professionals may not know."

Breed discrimination allows for practices in the public and private sphere which would not only penalize the black-listed "breeds", but also penalize their care givers, based solely on unscientific and anecdotal hearsay; hearsay which contradicts the opinion of trained specialists in the field of animal behavior and medicine.

I urge you to please consider the recommendations of the American Veterinary Society for Animal Behavior and support this important and beneficial legislation.

Thank you!

Brian Gay
Bachelor of Arts in The Humanities
Providence College - Class of 2011
617.791.2174 | bgay1@friars.providence.edu

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