

**Testimony Concerning HB 5543**  
**Insurance and Real Estate Committee, March 3, 2016**  
**Diana Goode, Avon CT**

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my support of HB 5443  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF BREED OF DOG AS AN UNDERWRITING FACTOR FOR  
HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS INSURANCE POLICIES.

About 5 years ago my then 10 year old daughter asked for a dog she could put in her purse, like Paris Hilton does. I got her an 18 month old Pitbull and told her to get a bigger purse.

I run with my 2 dogs often – my other dog is a lab/shepherd mix. We have a woman who walks with a dog in our neighborhood and the dog can't get near people or other dogs and the owner is very respectful of that, always going in a different direction when she sees someone coming. Last April we were running and they were walking, and the next thing I know her dog is running after us dragging it's leash, snarling and growling and the first thing I thought was my pit bull is going to kill this dog and that's all you are going to read about – pit bull kills family dog in Avon.

It went after my lab/shepherd first who kept turning around so her hind quarters were in the other dogs face, and my pit bull sat on my feet. Every once in a while her dog would lunge at her and she would stand up, like if we're going, we're going. The dog would back off, pace, snarl, growl and my pit bull would sit back on my feet – she never lost physical contact with me or eye contact with the other dog. Never growled, or barked or exhibited aggressive behavior at all.

Finally the owner caught up to us and took the leash. The dog had dragged her down and she had broken her nose in 2 places and was bleeding everywhere. I couldn't even ask her if she was OK because the dog was snarling, growling, barking and lunging at us, so I just left. And as I ran off I thought - the shepherd owner gets to go back to her perfectly insured house and I get to go back to my barely-insurable house because I have the dangerous dog? Really?

My insurance was cancelled last year – I had the insurance company for 8 years and the pit bull for 5 with no aggressive behavior what so ever – even when provoked. No bite history, nothing but nice. It's really not fair.

I have told my kids never to judge the breed, judge the dog. We have a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher in Avon that we all adore who has a large scar on his face where he was bitten by a black lab as a kid. Judge the dog not the breed, because if you do the opposite, that is dangerous. If a dog has bite history, aggressive behavior, that animal should be more expensive to insure. That's not my dog.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.