

**Testimony Concerning HB 5443**

**Insurance Committee, March 3, 2016**

**Mandy Wieting**

*Volunteer, Our Companions Animal Rescue*

I would like to thank the Insurance Committee 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.**

I volunteer as a dog walker for Our Companions Animal Rescue. I walk all different types of dogs at the sanctuary, and they each have their own unique personality. Some are pure bred, but most are a beautiful mix of any number of breeds. As I said, they are all very different from each other, despite what "breed" they are. For example we recently had two purebred Cocker Spaniels - one was extremely friendly and outgoing and wouldn't hurt a flea. The other had a completely different personality - she had bitten in the past and we had to be more careful around her. They were simply brought up differently, and therefore reacted differently. There simply cannot be a blanket legislation for specific breeds.

I have taken care of many Pit Bulls as well, and I can honestly say that I have never felt in danger of being bitten by any of them. They love belly rubs and long walks, just like a Labrador or a Golden Retriever.

Every dog is different. Period. Their inclination to bite or not bite is not determined by their breed, but rather by their upbringing and learned behavior.

I urge you to support this bill. Please give animals the voice they so strongly deserve.

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

Thank you,

Mandy Wieting

Vernon, CT

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