

Testimony in support for HB 5344

Judiciary Committee, February 24, 2016

Elizabeth Abbe

Residence: Glastonbury, CT

Volunteer with: Protectors of Animals, CT Votes for Animals and Tails U Win

I would like to express support for **HB 5344 AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY**: which would provide a "voice" for animals who are cruelly abused.

All you have to do is read *the Hartford Courant* to realize how many instances there are of animal cruelty across the state: in just the past few months a man in Windsor strangled his dog, an Enfield woman drowned her boyfriend's 15-year-old pet bird, a herd of goats were found sick and malnourished in Cornwall.. it goes on and on.

What's worse.... I just have to walk up my own street in Glastonbury to encounter a man arrested for animal cruelty! *The Glastonbury Citizen* recently reported that a neighbor of mine was arrested for animal cruelty. The Animal Control Officer discovered the neighbor's German Shepherd to be starved to the point of emaciation, paralyzed and left in a dog house in sub-zero temperatures. The dog's condition was described by the veterinarian who finally saw him as "horrific!

HB 5344 will establish a volunteer advocate to represent animals that are victims of cruelty like the German Shepherd, in court. The aim of the bill is to reduce the number of dismissed cases and help ensure that punishment fits the severity of the violence committed.

It's so shameful that over 10 years in Connecticut, only 18 percent of the animal cruelty cases have found the perpetrator guilty. And even then, the fines are typically inconsequential, as in the case of a dog named "Desmond." After months of torture, Desmond was hanged to death by a 22 year old New Haven man. Then he dumped Desmond's body into a garbage bag and left the dog on a dead end street in Madison.

With the passage of this bill, an individual might think twice before they cause injury to an animal. Right now, it's little more than slap on the wrist. Let's make sure this legislative session changes that.