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From: Renee <Renee3@iheartmedia.com>
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To: JudTestimony; Rep. Urban, Diana
Subject: HB 5344 Justic For Desmond

**Testimony Concerning HB 5344
February 24, 2016
Renee DiNino
Director of Community Affairs & On Air Programming for iHeartMedia in Connecticut
Host Community Access on iHeartRadio
On Air Personality The River 105.9**

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my support of HB 5344 Justice For Desmond .

My name is Renee DiNino, I'm the Director of Community Affairs and On Air Programming for iHeartMedia in CT and on air host on The River 105.9 and syndicated host on 9 radio stations with a reach of over 2 million people in CT and with iHeartRadio Reaching a quarter billion consumers every month through Radio/Digital/Outdoor/Mobile/Social/Events .

It's important you know this, because we in the media, have the same responsibilities as lawmakers and government officials do; every time we open our mouths we have an opportunity to make change, make a difference and create awareness in our communities.

House Bill 5344, Desmond's Law is an opportunity to do just that. When Desmond was alive I promoted him on the air for adoption, I remember him being adopted again and I remember what happened.

It's important to note, that I repeatedly get emails, calls, messages, pictures sent to me from thousands of people across CT asking for HELP in their town. In Hartford alone, just this week we had dogs dumped on train tracks, abused, dragged down the street, another case I'm not at liberty to speak about in another town, a repeat offender killing a dog and leaving it's body abandoned.

Animal Control Officers constantly ask me to help make some NOISE because their voices are unheard. They are following the laws, they ARE arresting the abusers and then when they get to the court system, they are being let out with reduced sentences, minimal punishment not equal to the crime and then go back to committing the same acts. It's a never ending cycle.

We know for a fact that a high percentage of our violent criminals in CT currently incarcerated, started committing acts of violence to animals, we know that many women in

domestic violent situations are afraid to leave because of their animal's safety - these are facts.

We know that many animal abuse offenders don't just abuse animals, but also abuse humans. We know that many children suffer abuse under the same hands as animal abusers.

This House Bill 5344, Desmond's Law isn't just for Desmond, it is for future innocent animals who suffer unspeakable crimes, whose offenders will go unpunished and go on to commit heinous acts against people.

I may not be a lawyer, government official or social worker - BUT, I am someone who is on the front line when it comes to dealing with the victims both human and animals. I get the pleas for help, I get asked why, time and time again, WHY we can't get the simplest things right.

I can't imagine any of you here can honestly disagree with having an advocate in the courtroom for an innocent creature subjected to the evil of a human, fighting for a just and measurable sentence to the crime. I can't imagine any of you in this room wanting your loved one, son or daughter or friend in association with a person who mutilates, strangles or stabs an animal 27 times and was let off with AR or another sentence that would have their crime expunged from the records. On a side note, when the abusers' record is expunged, they are in fact able/allowed to get another pet.

I do believe in rehabilitation, but I also believe not every criminal and crime deserves that. Desmond's Law will ensure this, Desmond's Law will provide hope in our Judicial system that finally EVERYONE is starting to understand the link between animal cruelty and domestic abuse.

I support HB 5344, Desmond's Law. I hope you will too.

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

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