

Testimony Concerning HB 5344

Judiciary Committee, 2/24/2016

Stephanie Malkin

I would like to thank the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to express my support of HB 5344, AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY.

I work in the Connecticut public school system as a School Psychologist, so not only am I passionate about animals, but I am also very passionate about children and families. I have spent many years studying the link between violence to animals and violence to people. What research has shown us over the years is that animal abuse is often just the "tip of the iceberg" and the first sign of other family and community violence. In addition to causing pain and suffering to the animals, animal abuse is a known predictor of concurrent or future violent acts. If volunteers are allowed to speak on behalf of innocent animals, there is a likelihood that these cases and charges will be taken more seriously by not only the courts, but the public as well. This would lead to more significant charges and consequences and may in turn prevent subsequent cases of domestic violence and child abuse. Therefore, justice for animals in the criminal justice system through the passing of HB 5344 would not only be a victory for Connecticut's animals, but also a victory for children and families as well.

My grandfather was an All-American football player at Holy Cross and was drafted by the New York Giants. He turned down the offer in order to attend Veterinary School and pursue his love of animals. He would often tell his grandchildren that if animals could speak, their insight and wisdom would have the capacity to heal the world one step at a time. I am humbled and honored to play a small part in carrying out his wish that all animals should and can have a voice. Through Desmond's Law, this wish is now a possible reality in Connecticut.

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

Thank you,

Stephanie Malkin

4 Highfield Lane, North Branford