

**Carroll, Rhonda**

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**From:** Paula Poplawski <pop1223@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2016 7:18 PM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Cc:** Rep. Lopes, Rick  
**Subject:** Testimony for 2/24 public hearing-- SUPPORT HB 5344 (support for animals that are victims of cruelty)

Dear Co-Chair Coleman, Co-Chair Tong, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Please accept this as my testimony (for public hearing held on 2/24/16) in **SUPPORT of HB 5344**, An Act Concerning Support for Animals that are Neglected or Treated Cruelly.

**I vote, and this issue is important to me.**

I support HB 5344 because:

- Research has established strong links between violent behaviors toward humans and violent behaviors toward animals.
- Law enforcement agencies must take violence toward animals seriously, and prosecutions must be encouraged. A disturbing OLR report ([2015-R-0262](#)) found that between 2005-15, 80% of animal cruelty offenses were either not prosecuted or dismissed.
  - Having court advocates for animals would be done at no cost by enlisting volunteer representation for animals from law students and law firms.
  - Teaching humans to behave with kindness and respect toward animals will help to build a more humane society.

I have been an animal advocate since I was ten years old. Animal abuse is becoming more and more prevalent in our society, without our judicial system taking these crimes seriously I am concerned that they will continue to multiply often leading to more violent crimes usually against humans. New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island all have much stronger animal welfare laws than Connecticut does, it is time to get on board with our neighbors.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,  
Paula Poplawski  
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New Britain, CT 06052