



Testimony in opposition to HB 5178 AAC THE LICENSING OF DOGS.

Planning & Development Committee

February 19, 2016

From Amy Harrell, President, Connecticut Votes for Animals

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Miller, and members of the Planning & Development Committee, I wish to express opposition to HB 5178, which would require dog owners to license their dog(s) every 3 years instead of every 1 year.

While it may seem more efficient, a 3-year license cycle may open the door to an increase in the number of dogs without rabies vaccines. One of the primary reasons for municipal dog licensing is to ensure that dogs are current on rabies vaccines. Since some rabies vaccines, particularly the initial dose, last one year only, a 3-year dog license cycle would allow certain dogs to fall behind on rabies vaccines. Rabies is a matter of public health, vaccines required by state law, and I believe we should beware the potential consequences of altering the current system that has been largely effective in helping to keep rabies in check.

Second, there are many changes that can happen to a town dog population within a 3-year period. Such changes would result in a highly inaccurate list of licensed dogs, which would complicate the job of the Animal Control Officer.

Finally, many Animal Control Officers annually visit residents in their town to follow up on dog licensing and rabies vaccines, and this provides a valuable opportunity for residents to ask questions, and for ACOs to provide updates on local and state animal-related ordinances. It is a component of community and relationship-building, which may be undermined with a 3-year license cycle.

I believe we should continue to invest authority in municipalities and Animal Control Officers to monitor the health and disposition of dogs in their community on an annual basis.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Amy Harrell
CT Votes for Animals
Resident of Vernon, CT