

Dear Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis, and distinguished members of the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Waterbury Dog Advisory Committee. This committee was initiated by Waterbury Mayor Neil O'Leary in 2014. He has since appointed four members of various professional backgrounds who all share in the passion to advocate for the safety and well-being of dogs in the Waterbury area.

The Waterbury Dog Advisory Committee is in strong support of Raised Bill 5147: An Act Increasing the Maximum Penalty for Persons Convicted of Subsequent Offenses of Malicious and Intentional Animal Cruelty.

We have seen several instances of abusive treatment of dogs in Waterbury. For example, our committee has responded to devastating instances of dog fighting where the owners were profiting over this heinous activity. We have also responded to calls regarding dogs being left on a chain outside in the cold weather without food or water. This is unacceptable animal abuse and we applaud the Environment Committee for raising this legislation to increase the maximum penalty for persons convicted of subsequent offenses of animal abuse.

The Waterbury Dog Advisory Committee believes that this legislation will help to combat the issue of animal abuse. As we have seen in our work in Waterbury, unfortunately, animal abuse is not always a one-time offense and can be repeated by the same person.

The Waterbury Dog Advisory Committee looks forward to working with the Environment Committee on this issue.

Thank you,

The Waterbury Dog Advisory Committee

Mayor Neil O'Leary  
Attorney Terry Caldarone  
Rebecca Calabrese, L.C.S.W., Psychotherapist  
Dan Lauer, Lt. Waterbury Police Force  
Doreen DelBianco