

To: The Public Health Committee
From: Anita and John Allen, Danbury, CT
Re: Proposed Bill No. 5659 January Session, 2017 LCO No. 373 *00373*
AN ACT CONCERNING THE VACCINATION OF ANIMALS
Date: 2/21/17

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We would like to express our support of this proposed legislation. First, let's be clear: no one is advocating for the end to rabies vaccination. It is a necessary vaccine. We are advocating for the proper use of the vaccine given modern medical science and studies.

At the present time, most veterinarians (there are exceptions) insist on vaccinating dogs annually for rabies because it gets the dogs into the office at least once a year for them. In light of medical science, this is not a proper reason for insisting on annual rabies vaccination (especially in light of the availability and legality of the 3 year vaccine). Sadly, it appears to be more of an income-generation reason for the annual rabies reminders rather than the true best interest of the pet.

With the quickly creeping incursion of corporate veterinary practice and the corporate greed that accompanies it, we the consumers and pet owners, and the pets themselves, need veterinarians who stay up to date with current research such as that of Ronald D. Schultz, Professor of Pathobiological Services, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, which has confirmed by rabies titer the effectiveness of a single dose of rabies vaccination for as long as 9 years after the administration of that single dose (please see his letter attached for information about the research he has conducted and his findings to date) and whom we can trust to take appropriate care of our pets. And we need the state to enact legislation such as this bill that will allow veterinarians to perform their calling to the best of their ability to take the best care of our pets.

Anita has been involved in dog shows/breeding purebred dogs for decades and stays informed on issues affecting canine health. She has had the unfortunate experience of observing a Samoyed related to her own champion show dog exhibiting signs of vaccinosis (in this case multiple veterinarians had vaccinated the dog for rabies 3 times in about a year. Had the veterinarians only been able to run a rabies titer on the dog, they would have seen he had been previously vaccinated and would not have over-vaccinated him). Ultimately, due to the danger the dog posed given the effects of vaccinosis on him, he was euthanized. The over-vaccination and the euthanization of this dog never needed to happen. We need to look at the research and bring veterinary medicine into the 21st century to avoid such outcomes with vaccines. We should not allow corporate greed, rather than good science, to dictate vaccination protocols for pets. And, the "need" to vaccinate annually is pushed by some vets to get pets into their offices/money in their coffers, whether science or titers say it is medically necessary or not.

Furthermore, common sense, logic, and just good medical practice require that vaccination doses be adjusted for the size/weight of the patient given that the purpose of a vaccine is to introduce the smallest amount of one or more components of viruses or bacteria to develop an immunity or protection without making a patient sick. It just makes no sense that a 6 pound Chihuahua would receive the same volume of vaccine as a 200 pound Great Dane or St. Bernard, and pet owners would expect the volume to be adjusted based on the size, weight, age and medical conditions of their pets.

Our present dog suffers from seizures. There is no way to know what exactly brought on his seizures, but, we can say he did not suffer from seizures before he was vaccinated with the rabies vaccine for the second time. If we had to do it all over again, would we give him his initial rabies vaccine? Absolutely. Rabies is serious. But, given the research of Ronald D. Schultz, Professor of Pathobiological Services, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, which has confirmed by rabies titer the effectiveness of a single dose of rabies vaccination for as long as 9 years after the administration of that single dose, why do we need to put our dog at risk of incurring seizures for an annual vaccination that is totally unnecessary? Vaccinations are known to trigger seizures in dogs. If the state continues to force us to vaccinate our dog unnecessarily, when a titer shows he has appropriate levels of immunity, and thus unnecessarily exposing him to the risk of further seizures, please tell us, which one of you can we call at 1 am to assist us with caring for our dog before, during and after the seizures the state is forcing on our dog (post-ictal phases can last for hours)?

Finally, why are we not giving out pets the same standard of care we give humans? Those humans required to get rabies vaccines are not revaccinated annually, nor even every 3 years. They are given titers to check their levels of immunity. Only if/when their immunity is shown to be too low by titer, are humans revaccinated. That is the standard of care our pets should receive as well.

Too many pets suffer needlessly, or worse, die, due to vaccinations simple titers would and do show they do not need. And their owners suffer needlessly as well, with the pain of watching their beloved pets go into seizures, knowing there is nothing to do to help them, or worse yet, to watch them die. Please end this needless suffering all around and pass this legislation. Let veterinarians use their training to help our pets, rather than to sicken/injure/kill our pets.

Thank you.

Anita and John Allen

This is the beautiful animal who will suffer from annual rabies vaccinations, Wonder. Don't make him suffer any more. Please pass this legislation.

