



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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TESTIMONY

In Support of S.B. No. 241

AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR THE INTENTIONAL INJURY OR KILLING OF POLICE ANIMALS OR DOGS IN VOLUNTEER CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS.

Judiciary Committee

March 9, 2018

Dear Co-Chairs Doyle, Kissel, Tong, Ranking Member Rebimbas and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

I want to thank you for granting a public hearing for S.B. No. An Act Increasing The Penalties For The Intentional Injury Or Killing Of Police Animals Or Dogs In Volunteer Canine Search And Rescue Teams. The work of police professionals is hard, dangerous, and of the utmost importance to all communities in our state. They are our first line of defense when it comes to those who prey upon innocent citizens. Included in this brave group are the working police canines. Police canines date back to early Greece, but have only been used in the United States since 1907. Many have been shot, injured, and killed by criminals in what is becoming an all too often occurrence. Due to these incidents, Congress passed a law to protect our four-legged partners. Under the Federal Law Enforcement Animal Protection Act, anyone convicted of purposely assaulting, maiming, or killing federal law enforcement animals such as police dogs and horses could be fined at least \$1,000 and spend up to 10 years in prison. Previously, the animals were covered by a variety of state, rather than federal, laws.

This legislation would increase the penalty to a Class C felony, up from a Class D category. It is important to send the message, backed by law, that attacks on our beloved police canines will be met with stronger penalties. We owe it to man's best friend and our police professional's best partner, this additional protection.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposed bill.