



State of Connecticut

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Testimony

In Support of S.B. 123: An Act Increasing the Penalty for the Intentional Injury of a Police Animal or Dog in a Volunteer Canine Search and Rescue Team.
Public Safety and Security Committee
February 11, 2021

Chairmen Bradley and Horn, Ranking Members Champagne and Green, and Distinguished Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, I would like to thank the committee for hearing testimony on **Senate Bill 123: An Act Increasing the Penalty for the Intentional Injury of a Police Animal or Dog in a Volunteer Canine Search and Rescue Team.**

This bill is an important proposal to increase the felony class from "D" to "C" for any person that intentionally injures or kills any animal while such animal is in the performance of their duties. Furthermore, if enacted this proposal will enforce stricter penalties on the perpetrator resulting in a fine not more than ten thousand dollars or being imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

Currently, the penalty is shallow, the individual who committed the felony is only fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than one year or both. The current fine is an unreasonable value to compare the value of animals that are used in the line of work for peace officers or volunteers for search and rescue teams.

Specifically, I feel strongly that these animals have more value than is currently expressed in the law. These canine officers work diligently under stressful conditions to help our causes. Some individuals do not recognize this noble attribute and fail to see the value of these service animals.

I urge the Public Safety and Security Committee to favorably act on Senate Bill 123; if passed it will help to insure our service animals a safer and more valued future. Thank you for consideration.