Government Administrations and Elections Committee
Public Hearing
March 8, 2024
Submitted by Jonathan XV
Official Mascot, University of Connecticut

Honorable Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, my name is Laura Centanni, I am a student at the University of Connecticut and a co-chair of Alpha Phi Omega's Husky Committee, which leads the fraternity's work to care for UConn's official mascot along with a local host family. I am joined today by Jonathan XV and am happy to read his testimony to the committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the University in support of **House Bill 5304 – An Act Designating the State Dog and State Candy.**

Jonathan I, who was named after Connecticut's first Governor, Jonathan Trumbull, arrived on campus in 1935 when we were known as Connecticut State College and had just begun awarding bachelor's degrees two years earlier. Four years later, this very General Assembly approved a bill that changed the name of our institution to the University of Connecticut. Since then, UConn has experienced exponential growth, helping to fuel our state's economy and serving as a source of pride for so many soaring to #9 in the Wall Street Journal Rankings of public universities and winning 23 NCAA national championships since 1981.

14 Huskies like me presided over the exciting history of the University of Connecticut, and while it's a great responsibility, I am excited to be the next iteration of a symbol that unites our state and energizes Nutmeggers nationwide!

Obviously being one myself, one could certainly accuse me of bias when championing the traits of a Siberian Husky. But words such as friendly, gentle, alert, outgoing, dignified, and intelligent are all characteristics used to describe Siberian Huskies like me by the American Kennel Club. Sure, the word mischievous appears a time or two but there is fine line between mischievous and a dog who likes to have some fun!

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I would be happy to answer questions if I could, but please know that it would be a great honor to me and my Siberian Husky brethren to be designated as our great state's official dog.

Go Huskies!