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HB5368

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**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT
PART 4
1015 – 1370**

2011

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djp/rgd ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

February 23, 2011
11:00 A.M.

Thanks.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Just in case any of you are wondering there are more members of the Committee than the two of us and I'm sure as the sun rises, so will they. So, with that our first speaker will be Steve Reviczky, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture who will be followed by Senator Kelly.

STEVE REVICZKY: Good morning, Chairman Meyer and Chairman Roy. I am Steven Reviczky and I serve as the Commissioner of Agriculture. It is my pleasure to be here this morning to share my thoughts on a wide range of agricultural related proposals. In the interest of brevity, it is my intention to offer a brief synopsis on each bill and then offer myself for any questions that you might have.

First, the Department is in favor of House Bill 5508, AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

Presently the council is comprised of 30 members and is supposed to meet once a year. In fact, the council hasn't met in quite some time and we think it would be a good idea to get that council back up and functioning. This legislation reduces the number of members to 15 and increases the number of meetings required under the law from one to four. It requires the council to focus on recommendations increasing the percentage of consumer dollars spent on Connecticut products. The intention is to make the council a more effective group that can concentrate on matters that grow Connecticut agriculture and improve the viability of Connecticut's farms.

The Department supports the concept of House

HB6402
SB992
SB993
SB994
SB207
HB5368

agricultural soils.

And, finally the Department is in favor of the concept of House Bill 5368, AN ACT EXTENDING CERTAIN PET SHOP LICENSE REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPORT ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION. The Department of Agriculture receives numerous complaints from the public regarding animals that enter Connecticut from other states and countries that have significant health issues. Respiratory problems and parasite infections are common. The Department has followed up on some of these complaints and found animals are sometimes adopted out of shipping containers and parking lots, often without the required current health certificates and exhibiting signs of disease. Currently the department has no authority to regulate the importation of these animals other than to require current rabies vaccination and health certificates.

This weakens the state's ability to control the introduction of non-endemic disease and parasites. The current situation poses significant risk to the state's population through the potential introduction of diseases that can be spread from animals to humans. And, it also threatens the state's companion animal population. The Department of Agriculture seeks to strengthen existing companion and animal importation law in order to minimize these risks. The Department seeks a dialogue with animal rescue organization in an effort to control the importation of disease with dogs entering the state and to prevent the practice of trafficking in dogs for profit. This bill serves as an important beginning point in resolving the issues that separate rescue organizations and the Department of Agriculture on this critical issue. And, I'd be happy to answer any

questions that you might have.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any questions from members of the Committee? Representative Willis.

REP. WILLIS: I just would like to thank the Commissioner for working on the poultry Bill 6402. We have several problems up in Litchfield County and throughout Connecticut that make the policy we have -- it makes not sense that our egg poultry people cannot sell to restaurants. Recently we lost a friend in Northwest Connecticut, John Brickell, and he helped me with this bill and so I certainly want to give him credit as well. So, thank you. Hopefully we can rectify this.

STEVE REVICZKY: You're welcome. Well, I'm hopeful that we can just get to a place where we can make local eggs available from small family farms to local restaurants and diners. I think we can get there and I look forward to working with the Department of Public Health to make this happen.

REP. WILLIS: Yes, we need to work with the Department of Public Health. But, thank you and thank you to Representative Hurlburt who also helped me with this bill and I thank the Chairs as well for putting this on our agenda.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Commissioner, congratulations on your appointment. Your great reputation and confidence precedes you and we're delighted to see you there. I wanted to ask you just about one bill, the farm wine bill at farmers' markets, its Senate Bill 993. I think you said that this is a Department bill and that it restricts -- there will be a permit that you'd have to have to sell farm wines at

SB994

Management Commission, I keep my boat at Noank Shipyard. Where we are, when the boats come by north of Ram Island, they will throw up a wake that will not only rock all the boats in the Anchorage, my boat which is tied to the dock perpendicular to the river could go up and down as much as four to five feet on some of them, with the water coming over, across the concrete dock that's got to be a couple feet high.

This is really dangerous. What makes it more dangerous is that's probably the most popular fuel dock in Southeastern Connecticut. Boats come from Rhode Island, all over Connecticut, Fishers Island, to fuel up there. And you have those boats on the outside of that dock parallel. So when those wakes come by, there's some real problems on occasion. And it's -- I think it's a great matter of safety and I've been looking forward to this, because other than the wakes, we really love it there.

REP. ROY: I say the same thing at home. Other than wakes, I love living there.

RAYMOND COLLINS: I think they're a different kind of wakes, though.

REP. ROY: Any questions or comments from members of the committee?

Seeing none, Raymond, thank you.

Dr. Arnold Goldman followed by Dr. Gayle Block.

And we move on to item 14, Bill 5368.

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: (Inaudible) -- represent the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association.

And I want to make clear that while 5368

advocates a regulatory regime on pet rescue, we don't advocate secession of adoption of animals from animal shelters anywhere. In fact, we're in favor of that. We do believe however, that the measures defined in 5368 are a necessary and measured approach to addressing the growing problem of unregulated transport of animals into Connecticut.

These animals are imported in a manner which ensures they remain hidden from oversight by Connecticut animal health authorities and further, they quite often have undeclared health problems which lead to disease exposure for Connecticut animals and unexpected veterinary medical costs for unsuspecting animal owners.

Animals originated from out of state are delivered here by ground, by air and other means without any oversight by Connecticut animal health authorities. Animals are transferred to new owners in commuter parking lots, along our highways and in storefront fares, with the protagonists melting into the countryside as soon as the animals are given to their new owners.

Dogs in particular enter this transport network from out of state pounds and shelters and rescue organizations housing animals in private homes out of state, and even from sales from commercial boarding -- breeding operations, what you would call puppy mills. Indeed, some animals are bred specifically for entry into this transport industry and characterization of those animals in needing rescue is grossly misleading.

There are numerous unintended consequences involved including inhumane animal welfare practices related to the transport itself,

circumvention of Connecticut disease control regulations and our pet lemon law as well as questionable financial transactions that harm Connecticut animal owners, the existing animals that they have and Connecticut humane organizations and businesses.

These harms include, animals arrive here with undisclosed diseases and deformities and new owners are subject to unexpected and unrecoverable costs of veterinary care as well as exposing animals they already own to disease. Novel diseases travel with these animals and these pose an emergent risk to animal and public health, risks local veterinarians and physicians may not immediately recognize.

Animal owners often have no recourse when the transport agents have no fixed location and may also feel guilty about complaining about an animal's undisclosed medical condition.

And then perhaps most important and rarely discussed is that Connecticut's source animals already here are passed over for adoption when large numbers of animals are brought in from other states, states that don't successfully deal with their animal control problems. That results in higher costs for animal control throughout our state and in our municipalities.

A VOICE: (inaudible).

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: We'll wrap it up. 5368 will allow animal health officials to regulate animal importation from all sources, prevent disease transmission and help ensure humane transport standards.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any questions or comments from members of the committee?

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Dr. Goldman. We do recognize there is a problem here, you know, with importers. And I went to thank you and the CVMA for being proactive in trying to, you know, make it safe and responsible for everybody.

Is there a difference between small importers or large importers in how animals get into this state? Or where they come from?

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: Well, I mean, they're coming mostly from southern states. And, you know, I could pin Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee as some examples. I guess traditionally these states don't have the same public education regarding animal welfare. And they don't have the same resources, I'm imagining, dedicated either on a county level or a statewide level for animal control and animal welfare. So there are shelters that are full down there.

The definition between a small and a large, that's a little harder. There are individuals who have not-for-profits that they control, that on weekend fairs bring in a hundred animals or more. And that occurred recently in the vacant storefront to the right of Petco in Farmington.

And then there's a transport company that

brokers, that arranges the physical transport of animals on the request of individuals here. You don't need to be an organization to call yourself a rescue. It can be, what I call, a kitchen table rescue -- is one person with a laptop. They identify an animal in another state on petfinder.com or other websites. They advertise on their own website or through other means for a new owner and then money changes hands somehow and they broker that animal into the hands of a Connecticut Citizen.

They may never see the animal. They may never touch the animal. Sometimes they meet the transport van and physically arrange that transport, but just as often there's no physical contact at all.

It's difficult to say. There are reputable organizations that do import animals. We'll hear from Mrs. Linker in a moment about that, but there's just all manner of individuals and organizations involved and money always changes hands.

REP. HURLBURT: Well, and you know, that's part of what we need to get to with this bill is, you know, we want to protect the vets. We want to protect the reputable organizations. We want to protect the people.

I just, walking in hallway, Representative Olson told me that she's rescued, you know, 20 or 25 cats on her own. You know, and she's not the problem and, you know, I would imagine that she likely isn't the problem, you know, in this sort of instance.

But we want to make sure that the person who takes no responsibility, who's not trying to, you know, ensure the animal's health, not

trying to ensure, you know, the well being of the animal as its coming into the state.

Would you support -- this was an idea kind of seeing in the future, a lot of discussions going on outside -- would you support if the -- you have to have, by law, you're supposed to have a certificate of origin when you bring the animal into the state. Is that correct?]

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: I believe that interstate transport of animals requires a USDA health certificate.

REP. HURLBURT: Would you support, if upon bringing that animal into the State, that you then have to get a local veterinarian to certify in the health of the animal before it can be sold or, you know, given away or however that transfer happens?

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: I think that's a necessary but insufficient thing. And the reason is that particularly in the case of infectious disease, there is a prepatent period where an animal, you know, you take a bunch of animals from diverse sources, put them in a truck and ship them for over 24 hours with limited food and water and the noise and the, you know, all the stress associated with that. All those viruses and other diseases are going to transfer among each other. And some of those animals may be immune suppressed.

So I think if you examine the animal immediately upon delivery, the health situation may look good, five days later it may not look as good. I'm not sure that's sufficient. I think it's important that -- I think in addition to that there has to be somebody with a Connecticut address who is responsible under our existing pet lemon law

for what happens to that animal.

I have a client whose testimony you should have, Mrs. St. John, whose animal was delivered here with no report of an illness and has a permanent parasitic condition that's unlikely to be cured that's costing her thousands of dollars. She wasn't advised of that in advance and there's nobody in the state that she can hold responsible for that.

REP. HURLBURT: That's a good point. I think that's a good, you know, something that we should look to include in law.

And the pet lemon law was something I worked with a number of other legislators to get through. And again, it was kind of the similar situation, where it this year, we both agreed on the problem, where both sides agreed on the problem. We just had to make sure that we found a solution that, you know, appropriately addressed the issue.

So I went to thank you.

And thank you Mr. Chairman for the committee's time.

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I think that we are all agree that (inaudible).

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: I'm sorry. I didn't know that you wanted to talk to me. I'm sorry. I thought you were --

REP. URBAN: Did you warn him, Brian?

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: I thought you were just
(inaudible).

REP. ROY: A lot of people tried to do that, sir.

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: Sorry, Representative Urban.
Sorry.

REP. URBAN: That's fine.

I think we're all in agreement that this is a huge problem and that we want to do something to address it. But my concern -- and Brian, Representative Hurlburt, already, you know, went down this path -- is the small nonprofit rescue organization versus these big organizations who are tracking animals in and taking up storefronts, et cetera.

And by putting this into the -- under the section of pet stores we're, in essence, saying that we're talking about businesses and businesses, in essence, are profit maximizing entities. And the ones that I'm concerned about are those that are not -- businesses are not profit maximizing entities, but who are trying to bring in dogs in a responsible manner -- or cats.

So I'm wondering whether there's going to be some room here for some negotiation. And I don't know it's -- I'm looking at it as a one size doesn't fit all. And I think that, you know, trying to get it so that it actually fits and we can get to the people that are bringing in dogs really irresponsibly. And the testimony is that we have here -- has come from several people who have had terrible experiences with adopting, where there are guys passing money in parking lots and, you

know, that's not what we want.

So I'm hoping that perhaps we could go forward and work, work this out so that we can. And I think that your testimony is enormously valuable. And your knowledge is enormously valuable to get us to where we want to go.

So I thank you for your being here. So it's a comment. So you could have left.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from members of the committee? Seeing none, thank you very much, Doctor.

ARNOLD GOLDMAN: Thank you, sir.

REP. ROY: Dr. Gayle Block followed by Juliana Ely.

GAYLE BLOCK: Good afternoon, Representative Roy, members of the Environment Committee and guests.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you in support of House Bill 5368. I am the President-elect of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association. I'd like to address this bill more from an ethical point of view.

Let me begin by saying I've always felt more of an obligation to my patients, the animals, than to my clients. I believe it is my highest responsibility to act in the best interests of my patients and I've always taken that responsibility very seriously. That being said, let me say unequivocally, we are not against the adoption of animals that are in need of homes. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, my own dog came from the Bridgeport municipal pound eight years

ago.

I'm a huge proponent of adopting from shelters and pounds. Since the State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture began the animal population control program more than 15 years ago, we have seen many more adoptions occur from shelters, and the euthanasia of unowned animals decreased significantly. This program promotes the spaying or neutering of animals adopted from pounds. That success however doesn't mean that the problem of pet overpopulation in Connecticut is solved or that there are not still many animals without homes that are euthanized.

This bill would in no way prevent the adoption of animals from in our state or out of our state. It would only create responsibility among those involved in arranging adoptions and promote in-state adoption first.

Unfortunately, with no laws directly governing the importation of companion animals into Connecticut we have seen many problems occur including significant health issues. Intestinal parasites, heartworm disease, respiratory and dermatologic illnesses and malnutrition are just a few of them. I personally have seen more cases of heartworm sees these past few years than I can ever remember. Worse, many of these illnesses are contagious to the pets already living in the state of Connecticut.

In many cases, because these animals are essentially sold directly from transport vehicles, there is no recourse for the adoptive family that has usually paid hundreds of dollars for their new pet. They then become saddled with the financial burden of treatment. And if they can't afford treatment

they may then relinquish them to local animal control facilities that are not able to treat them either and they are euthanized.

In fact, animal trafficking has become so lucrative that some are breeding specifically for transport to the north. It is outrageous that we still must kill thousands of healthy adoptable cats and dogs due to pet overpopulation while some profit from so-called rescue. Meanwhile, people are paying exorbitant amounts of money for so-called adoption donations not knowing and understanding that there has been no oversight to this process whatsoever.

The transportation itself may be inhumane -- I know Dr. Goldman touched on that -- by packing too many animals together in one transport vehicle, not stopping enough, not providing clean water and food, not cleaning their cages, lacking temperature control. There have been instances of cats being transported here for adoption. In this state there is no doubt in my mind that cat overpopulation far outnumbers the dog overpopulation. Very few municipalities deal with the stray cat population.

Shouldn't we be taking care of business in our own state first? Don't we all have a responsibility to see that these pets transported into Connecticut are treated humanely and are healthily? Those that truly care about the health, well being and placement of unowned animals will continue to do so while working within the confines of our laws. Importers should --

REP. ROY: (Inaudible).

GAYLE BLOCK: Yes. Importers should be made to

comply with the same laws that legitimate in-state adoption agency pet stores and breeders do.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And as somebody who has known Gayle for many years I'm surprised that you're successful in getting her to cut it off a little bit early. It's -- she's not an easy one. And for everybody, Gayle -- Dr. Block is my veterinarian, is a constituent of mine.

I do. I do. She actually spends more time with me than the two kittens we have, but I want to thank you, Dr. Block, for coming today and for asking me to introduce, you know, legislation that gets at this problem. Because it is an issue and you see it and we hear about it and we want to make sure that the animals are safe.

And one of the points you made in your testimony I think is really the crux of the issue that we're getting at, is we want to protect rescue organizations that are truly doing this to rescue animals and make sure the land in a safe and happy home instead of being euthanized. And the big guys, the profit guys, the bad actors are the people who we are really trying to make sure the law gets at. And of course I understand there's some, you know, little guys who are bad actors, you know, small organizations.

One of the issues that's come up is, if by

being considered a pet shop there's certain ability for law-enforcement to kind of bang on your door at any given time and demand to see the animals and where they're kept. And for people who are, you know, have an animal that they're housing, you know, temporarily while they're trying to find a new home, you know. My parents have done that for instance, you know. They're trying to do the right thing.

Is there a better way to classify that person instead of having them pay a hundred dollar fee to, you know, to be certified or to be, you know, legit in the department's eyes, that gives them some protections but, you know, continues the idea of they're being safe? You know, they're safe and the animals safe and protect the animals.

GAYLE BLOCK: Are you talking about the one person? The person who has one foster animal that they keep for a week?

REP. HURLBURT: Right.

GAYLE BLOCK: I'm not sure that that would fall under -- I don't know that that's our intent for sure. I do think that just because you have a rescue out of your home, that is the same thing as having a business and it should be treated accordingly. Because in fact, you are -- whatever you want to call it -- you're receiving money for those pets and there needs to be some oversight.

So there are lots of rescue organizations that use foster homes. I don't know that this falls under the purview of the specific foster home as it does for the rescue.

REP. HURLBURT: Okay. So maybe if we created some sort of foster home definition to --

GAYLE BLOCK: Which is different, because they are usually -- usually foster homes are not -- the foster parent, if you will, is not the one who is responsible for the dog. It's the rescue organization essentially.

REP. HURLBURT: Oh, okay.

GAYLE BLOCK: So I'm not sure that person would fall under it anyway.

REP. HURLBURT: Okay.

GAYLE BLOCK: And that certainly is not our intent.

REP. HURLBURT: And the question I asked the previous speaker, what about having, you know, when they come in, they have to, by law, they have to have the certificate of origin. What about having these animals, you know, or the transferer bring them to a vet and get a certificate of health to make sure that they're you know, they're coming into the state as safe as possible? And I understand the, you know, the issue brought up that some diseases may not --

GAYLE BLOCK: Right.

REP. HURLBURT: -- you know, show themselves, you know, in the first few days.

GAYLE BLOCK: Right.

REP. HURLBURT: But at least they're making a stop at a vet.

GAYLE BLOCK: I agree. I would have to agree with Arnie in theory, that it's a great start, but not sufficient. I think it's beyond a great start. I do think that they should, you

know, I do think that they should be seen by a veterinarian and at least -- and at least the obvious things.

You know, as he was talking about his client with edema (inaudible), that's -- those are things that we would see. We would certainly -- might not see some pneumonia coming or respiratory diseases, but in general we have to start some place and I think that these are the places to start.

It's very sad to see. I had someone who adopted a dog that -- from the South, that was brought up here. Heartworm tested negative on the paperwork. We heartworm tested it this year and the dog came up heartworm positive. And now she has paid to treat the dog. And they have no recourse for those things because, in fact, there are no laws protecting people.

REP. HURLBURT: Uh-huh. Do you think if we made that person responsible for bringing the animals to a vet, that that would cut down on the big guys who are bringing in, you know, a hundred animals at a time that, you know, instead of trying to find a vet to certify the health of all these animals, that they would just skip Connecticut and go to Rhode Island or Massachusetts or --

GAYLE BLOCK: I think Connecticut is very lucrative for them. So my answer would probably be no. I'm not sure how they would make arrangements, but my personal thought would be, no, they wouldn't. They would figure out a way to do it whether it's to have a veterinarian there or, you know, like pet stores have their own veterinarians that they use as well.

REP. HURLBURT: Would that help the problem of sick

animals coming into the state? I mean, so, you know, the big guys can, you know, drive up, you know, their hundred animals packed into a, you know, into a, you know, small truck which is, you know, disgusting to think about, but they can do that.

But then have to at least have a, you know, a vet who's, you know, certified in the State who, you know, has a professional license online and has certified that these animals are healthy and they are approved for transfer, whether it be, you know, to cover the cost of vaccinations or whatever or, you know, or for profit.

Would that be a better situation for the animal as well as the new family?

GAYLE BLOCK: Yes. I mean, I think all of these things add layer upon layer of ensuring health, you know, ensuring health and honesty from the people involved from the South coming up to the North.

As Arnie touched upon, you know, we in Connecticut are very good about spaying and neutering. The animal population control program is amazing. And I think that, you know, the education down south, in fact, they don't -- that's obviously the issue. Spaying and neutering that they don't do that. Yes, I think all along the way as we hold people responsible, as they should be.

We're dealing with living, breathing things. We're not dealing with a car. We're dealing with real things. Then yes, I absolutely think that, at least, it will help the accountability even of the transporter.

REP. HURLBURT: Great. Well, thank you, Dr. Block.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

GAYLE BLOCK: Thank you. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from members of the committee? Seeing none, thank you.

Juliana Ely followed by Laura Reid. And if I have your first name wrong --

JULIANA ELY: You have it correct.

Chairman Roy, Chairman Meyers and members of the Environment Committee, my name is Juliana Ely and this is my testimony in support of H.B. 5368.

On Friday December 10th -- excuse me, I get really choked when I tell the story. On Friday December 10th my husband and I went to the SPCA adoption fair in Farmington, Connecticut where we found our little Bessie. She was very small and thin to the point that you could see her backbones and her hip bones.

She is a one to two-year-old beagle with a big heart and loved the attention my husband and I gave her from outside the pen. Although her being very thin, we decided that we would give her her forever home and take her home and give her some groceries to fatten her up. We paid the \$325 adoption fee and took her home.

On Monday the 13th, I made an appointment with my vet, Higginum Vet, as I was very concerned with her health. She only weighed 12 pounds which means she had lost four pounds, a quarter of her body weight from being transported from Dalton, Georgia on the 8th of

December.

Her papers indicated that she was 16 pounds. She had a fever over 105, was dehydrated, anemic, loaded with whip worms. I made a call to the vet in Georgia to get more information and found out that Bessie had been spayed on December 7th and put on a transport vehicle on the 8th. I asked them why she was transported so quickly after her surgery and was told that she would have a better chance of being adopted in Connecticut.

On Tuesday the 14th, chest x-rays were taken and it was determined that Bessie had a bad case of an ammonia, and was suggested that we take her to 24-hour emergency vet in Rocky Hill where she would need 24 hours of care to treat her.

On Thursday the 16th we were able to bring her home with instructions to continue breathing treatments every four hours per two weeks along with heavy doses of antibiotics scheduled, and scheduled follow-up visits with our vet.

I did make contact with the SPCA regarding Bessie and the gentleman I spoke with there said there was nothing he could do. I had the option to bring her to their vet, but they were broke, in very defensive tone. The only thing I really wanted was to make them aware of Bessie's condition and warn them that other dogs that were in the pen or near her may become sick.

He did tell me that they had other sick dogs. He stated that this was not the fault of the SPCA and they would go on the words of the vets or shelters where these dogs were coming from. It is my opinion that these animals are

the SPCA's responsibility the minute they are put on a transport vehicle and should be looked at more carefully when they arrive here before being put up for adoption.

If someone had reviewed Bessie's paperwork they would have noticed the weight-loss and maybe caught and she was very sick. I signed a contract that I would give Bessie her forever home, but on the other side of that I also signed a health care policy that states that the SPCA makes every effort to ensure the health of all pets prior to adoption. It is my opinion that they failed this in Bessie's case. As of today Bessie is doing much better. She has gained seven and a half pounds and continues to go for checkups.

This has been an unexpected financial expense of just under \$2500 to date for my family. I honestly believe this is a good thing the SPCA is doing, however we need to make sure that this type of situation doesn't happen to other families who may not be in the position to pay these bills and go through the emotional stress of dealing with such a sick animal.

Thank you so much.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Bessie certainly has a good home. You can tell that.

This pen that you talked about, is this a store or just a --

JULIANA ELY: This was in a storefront in Farmington. They rented a big building right next to the Petco. And we went in there at 5:30 on Friday night and there were hundreds of pens all over this building. And there were dogs right next to each other and inside the same pens with others. And big ones,

little ones, puppies, full-grown dogs, it didn't matter.

REP. ROY: So this wasn't a regular pet store or anything like that?

JULIANA ELY: No. This was the adoption fair that the SPCA of Connecticut sponsored.

REP. ROY: Did they run ads in the paper or something to --

JULIANA ELY: We had actually seen it on television. My husband and I were looking to adopt another dog. I've had rescue dogs before from the Connecticut Humane Society. And we were looking to find our Basset hound another companion and we had looked in several places and throughout Connecticut in the Humane Society. And we couldn't find anything that suited us for a small pet for our Basset hound.

I also looked online for pet adoption things here in Connecticut. And low and behold, everything that you go online is -- well, the dogs aren't here. They're in Texas or they're in wherever, Arizona. And we have to ship them here. So -- which means you're paying an exorbitant fee to adopt a dog that you've never even been able to look at.

So when we saw this we decided that that we would go there and see what they had.

REP. ROY: Okay. So let me get this straight. SPCA sponsored this program?

JULIANA ELY: Yes, they did.

REP. ROY: They advertised it on TV. Then when you got the dog and the dog was ill, you called

the SPCA and the gentleman you spoke to said it wasn't their problem.

JULIANA ELY: Basically. He said that I had the option to bring her down to their vet for a one-time thing down in Monroe. It was my opinion the dog was too sick to take to Monroe. I needed to get her to my vet Monday morning.

And as far as the expense of that was concerned, if you read the documentation that they give you, it's limited, very limited. You pay a -- you'll still pay a copay. It doesn't cover any blood work. It doesn't cover hardly anything. So now I would have traveled all the way Monroe to get nothing and I'd still have to pay and have my dog way down in Monroe.

You had said about the paperwork and health certificates and that, and I can sit here and show you all of that paperwork. But something fell through the cracks. This little dog was near death and nobody saw it.

They told me -- when I talked to the gentleman at the SPCA he was very defensive about me calling. I didn't want my money back. I wanted to warn him and I told him I thought that it was their responsibility that somebody should have seen this. Somebody should have been able to take all these health certificates and all of this stuff and looked at it and noticed that this little thing who was 12 pounds, had lost 4 pounds in transport over a couple day period.

He told me that the dog came off the truck that morning, Friday morning the 10th, which means she was on the truck from the 8th to the 10th before she was taken off of that truck.

And to me that's just -- that's unacceptable.

REP. ROY: Okay. Thank you.

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for sharing your story with us. As Chairman Roy said, Bessie is very fortunate to have somebody who was willing to bring her back to health instead of, you know, what I think a lot of people would have done, is just put her down at that point.

You said you had a certificate of health, but it's -- was it a certificate of origin or a certificate of health?

JULIANA ELY: I have a certificate from the vet in Georgia that came with the adoption papers. I also have a health certificate from the SPCA stating that this dog was in good health. And then you sign all the adoption papers telling you --

REP. HURLBURT: .And I'm not familiar with the SPCA and I just pull them up online really quickly here. Is their routine they bring dogs up from the South or animals from the South that don't have a home down there and try to --

JULIANA ELY: To be honest with you, I never heard of dog adoption fair like this until I saw this one being advertised. And I'm told that they do it quite regularly.

REP. HURLBURT: All right. Oh, yeah. Yeah. My parents are -- love their animals. And so whenever they have one of these they always go to find them. So every weekend I figure out where they've been by where the local animal

adoption thing was.

But I do think that if -- that if we had, you know, a Connecticut vet for, you know look over the animal, that's a step in the right direction. That you know, if it had surgery and was transported and lost a quarter of its weight within a four-day period, I think, you know, at least the vet I know who happens to be sitting in the room, so I have to say nice things about her -- would say, something is wrong here. You know, this animal isn't ready to be, you know, transferred to a new owner.

But I want to thank you for taking time out of your day to share this story, because this is exactly what we're trying to get it. We want to make sure that the people who are doing the right thing aren't penalized. And the people who are doing the wrong thing by, you know, giving animals away and that sort of condition, you know, face some sort of penalty. Because that's not the intent of, I think, what you were looking to do. I don't think that's the intent of who we should be protecting in the state. So thank you.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

JULIANA ELY: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Any other questions or comments from members of the committee? Didn't.

Juliana, did you provide the committee with written testimony?

JULIANA ELY: I believe I did. Yes.

REP. ROY: You have it. Okay. Thank you.

JULIANA ELY: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Laura Reid followed by Peter Kuck --
looks like.

LAURA REID: Hi, Representative Roy. Chairman Roy,
it's great to see you. Thank you.

And thank you for your good work,
Representative Hurlburt.

My name is Laura "Peach" Reid and I'm the
owner and president of a company here in
Connecticut called Fish Mart. We import
aquarium fish and sell them and reptiles and
small companion animals, not including cats
and dogs -- and birds to pet stores throughout
the Northeast.

We've been in business for 37 years and I've
been a member of PIJAK for that whole time.
And I'd like to refer to you electronic -- an
electronic submission of PIJAK testimony that
I'll be referring to as well.

And just for the record, I'd like you to know
that I have two cats at home and they're both
from the animal shelter in New Haven.

And Mr. Chairman and members of the
Environment Committee, I am here today to
testify in favor of Committee Bill 5368 with
clarifying revision and a suggestion for your
consideration.

It's gratifying to see that the committee
supports standards for licensing and
regulating all parties who import animals for
adoption. This helps protect both the animals
and the persons who adopt them as pets making
them members of their family.

As you know, here in Connecticut the standards

of excellence for puppies and kittens in pet shops has served as a national model. I'm pleased to have worked with members of this committee, that Pet Advisory Joint Advisory Council, PIJAK, the Department of Agriculture and other interested parties over the years in forming these high standards and expanding on them over time.

We are proud that the pet shops in Connecticut who sell puppies and kittens helped develop and are proud to comply with such high standards and requirements. At this time the public is protected only if they buy puppies and kittens from an shops. There is a guarantee with every puppy and kitten sold which provides the consumer with various options and reimbursements regarding the health of the animals.

Pet shop puppies account for perhaps just 10 percent of all puppies sold in this state and it has long been the pet industry's position that standards that we are proud to abide by should be the same for all puppies and kittens sold whoever or whatever the source.

And incidentally, the pet shop lemon law mandates that pet shop puppies that come in with the health certificates -- others use too, but before a puppy can be offered for sale in a pet shop it's got to be seen by a Connecticut veterinarian and every 14 days thereafter. And again, there's a warranty for the consumer.

So this bill would license and regulate entities that import these animals into the state for adoption. This bill would make sure that certain health requirements occur. That any animal offered for adoption would require

veterinary examination prior to sale every and every 14 days until sold. And the maintenance of these records, who couldn't support that?

I do have two concerns, however. One is to ensure that the brokers pet shops use for the importation of their puppies and kittens into the state are not inadvertently included in this bill. As I said, only pet shop puppies and kittens are so extensively regulated. This is my primary concern and I know PIJAK would be happy to assist in any language clarification that may be required on this.

The other concern is perhaps more a suggestion. Why not go one step further like you've been discussing with the prior speakers? And I'm really grateful to CVMA for all their help with this bill. But why not go that one step further and have adopting agencies, the big agencies have a guarantee for the consumer just like the pet shops do?

There are many incidents. We heard about a horrible tragic one that just brought tears to my eyes of adopted animals having parasites, viral or bacterial infections or other physical ailments. And there is no recourse for the consumer who adopted the animal. And if you stayed on that pet shop path and offered the consumer the same warranty, that would be beneficial for the animal as well as for the adopting parents.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

REP. ROY: Laura, thank you. And thank you for your suggestions. The committee will take them to heart.

Are there any questions or comments from members of the committee? Seeing none --

Oh, Representative Rose.

REP. ROSE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your testimony. If we were to offer a guarantee, do you think that in the instance of the previous speaker's dog, that dog would have been put to sleep?

LAURA REID: By the ASPCA, I would sure hope not. I mean, I can't imagine. It's shocking to me that, you know, such a large and, I thought, well-respected organization would do that sort of thing.

But the thing is if the veterinarian isn't going to recommend putting the animal to sleep -- okay, and the new owner isn't going to want to put the animal put to sleep, that's -- so I don't think so. No.

REP. ROSE: Sure. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Oh, we're not done yet. I don't get the same treatment as Diana Urban around here, do I? Geez.

LAURA REID: I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Representative.

REP. HURLBURT: I love you Diana.

That was one of my concerns that Representative Rose brought up, was that, you know, if -- we might have to put, you know, or a vet might suggest or somebody who's not willing to, you know, bring an animal back to good health might put the animal down if a vet

wouldn't be willing to certify it.

But the previous speaker was the SPCA. I thought it was the ASPCA, too, which kind of surprised me given their reputation and their advocacy efforts. But it's the SPCA and that's why I was wondering about who the SPCA is. I've never heard of that organization so --

LAURA REID: Right.

REP. HURLBURT: So you know, but the ASPCA definitely has a different connotation and reputation to -- that they bring into the state of Connecticut.

LAURA REID: Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

REP. HURLBURT: So I just wanted to make sure that we're all clear on that. That it's very -- two different organizations. So -- but thank you for your testimony.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from members of the committee? Seeing none, thank you very much, Laura.

LAURA REID: Thank you very much, Chairman Roy.

REP. ROY: Peter Kuck followed by Susan Linker.

PETER KUCK: Chairman Roy, it's good to see you, again. I saw you yesterday at public safety. It's always a pleasure.

My name is Peter Kuck and I live in West

Hartford, Connecticut. I'm here today to speak for myself and no other organization, and that's important to understand because I was not able to get the organization who I work with today to get their approval for this. So this is on my shoulders.

I'm here testifying on Bill Number 5368, AN ACT EXTENDING CERTAIN PET SHOP LICENSE REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPORT ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION. I'm limiting my comments to changes that I would like to see made to Section 22 344 Sub E, lines 70 through 99. My concern is that the new Section E does not adequately differentiate between a for-profit business and a nonprofit volunteer rescue organization.

I belong to an organization that rescues Siamese cats in states from Florida to Maine. Rescue organizations such as the one I am a volunteer for are not a business in the usual sense of the word. They depend upon networks of volunteers who will, as I do, rescue, Foster and find homes for abandoned and abused animals.

Animals, who if these organizations did not exist, would become a burden on the state's animal control officers and municipal budgets. These organizations run at a loss and exist only to due to contributions. A typical volunteer following the protocols of these organizations will foster either one or two pets at a time about, providing love, shelter food and the cat's kitty litter out of their own pockets. The organization provides training, the money for veterinarian services and a web presence to re-home these animals.

I do not oppose the licensing of rescue groups because I believe that it is one way to

prevent puppy mills or backyard breeders from dumping animals in our state. My concern is that Subsection E would not exempt the volunteers of a licensed rescue organization from onerous regulation that would destroy the organization's volunteer pool and therefore condemn a multitude of abandoned animals to death.

Now for my part, I prefer fostering ten-year-old lost cats. They're geezers like me. And in most cases, here in Connecticut, when a shelter gets a ten-year-old cat they put it down. I have fostered seven cats since I started this, one which came from Massachusetts and ended up with a 73-year-old woman on Woodland Street. Two which were going to be put down, which we saved four hours from being euthanized, were 13-year-old bonded females from a vet in Stamford, who ended up with a woman in Manchester.

My cat called, Me Too, who was here in Connecticut, rescued out near Waterbury and went to a home in Massachusetts.

Another cat named Apollo, from Connecticut who was one of the four cats belonging to a woman in Newtown, Connecticut, who died on her cats. My organization, even though we had only given that woman one cat back in 2002, took all four of them. Two our them are currently being fostered in Willimantic, one is now in Massachusetts and I will probably adopt (inaudible) myself.

I get upset about this because I have visited shelters. I've seen what's been going on. I don't like it. I don't even volunteer down at the Connecticut Humane Society anymore because cats you foster there go back to the shelter and you never hear what happens to them.

Two weeks ago before the rain and ice storm, I rescued two cats, one in Naugatuck named Chillie. She's going to go home to a new home in New York. And one at 410 Capital Avenue living in the garage who went to a --

REP. ROY: Can we wrap it up, Peter?

PETER KUCK: Yeah.

Well, anyhow. To make a long story short we need the regulations, but I think that this bill has to be looked at, gone through and standards and definitions must be set. We cannot be loose with this. We have to tie it nice and tight and we have to make sure that the volunteers of a bona fide rescue organization do not get driven from the love of their life by onerous regulations.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Peter, thank you for your testimony and your, you know, warm heart to find time to take care of all these animals. It's, you know, it's an amazing thing and, you know, and it's nice that you make the time to do that and find homes for all these animals that otherwise probably, you know, wouldn't have one.

Is the Section E the piece that allows for law enforcement to come in?

PETER KUCK: No. Section E appears to be section

of the bill which was copied and pasted from up above which adds in rescue organizations to the regulation.

And I think that this is a good bill and it's got a good purpose, but I think without the input of people from rescue organizations, okay, and without some investigation of what they are, where they are, who is bona fide and not -- and there's plenty of information available at your request.

We're not going to get it right and we should get it right because it's about the cats. And it's about the dogs -- with the woman who testified earlier and it's about all (inaudible) all of the animals (inaudible).

When I get a cat from out of state it quarantines at my house for 14 days because pets which are transferred tend to, through stress, get upper respiratory infections. You cannot send them home. You have to make sure that they are right.

The cat that I'm going to adopt, as I said, was adopted in 2002 by the woman who died. That cat always is our cat, our organization's cat. Always comes back with us and that we will re-home them. We do not abandon our children.

REP. HURLBURT: Well, again thank you very much. And you're right. You know, we have to get this -- we have to get the language correct. And I want to thank you for some suggestions on making sure we get it right the first time to protect all the people who are doing the right thing out there. So thank you, Peter.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments? Peter,
you're all set. Thank you.

Susan Linker. And she will be followed by
Claude Brouillard.

SUSAN B. LINKER: Thank you, Representative Roy,
members of the committee. I appreciate the
opportunity to testify. My name is Susan
Linker. I'm with Our Companions Domestic
Animals Sanctuary. I'm also the vice
president of Connecticut Votes for Animals and
I'm a member of the Animal Welfare Federation
of Connecticut. And I'm testifying related to
5368.

While the animal rescue and welfare
communities certainly support regulations of
animals being imported into the state, in
fact, I've sat in front of you many, many
times talking about this exact issue. We've
been trying to get it right over the years and
we still are interested in having fair and the
important regulations to address this issue.
And while I think there's a lot of common
ground that we have with the language here, in
this particular language we can't fully
support, although we do support some
regulation for importation.

I think our primary objection is that this
language presumes that the people who are
rescuing dogs and cats are businesses and pet
shops and put them all into that same
category. And for those people who are saving
lives and raising money through donated
dollars and using volunteers, it is offensive
and insulting to put us in the same category
as pet shops who are getting their animals
from breed -- that are bred through puppy

mills and imported for the business of selling animals for profit. So I'd just like to, you know, make that note.

Of course, you know, I think it's important to note that the reputable rescue organizations who are rescuing animals both here and other states, you know, this is not cost recovery. It costs us a lot of money to help these animals and that's why we raise money through private contributions and that's why we use our volunteers.

Of course there are some organizations that do appear to run kind of pet-store-like operations. I've personally gone to many of these super-duper adoption events where hundreds of animals are adopted out during a weekend. And I have been disgusted with the conditions of the animals there. I've, like the women who testified previously, saw animals imported off the truck. Puppies with spay scars, that were listless, lying in their own pool of diarrhea and there's absolutely no, no reason that should happen.

We are interested in working with the CVMA to create language that adds to this, but also distinguishes us clearly from the pet shops. And we have submitted in my testimony some points to better protect animals, I feel, once they end up here. And to create accountability for the organization who brings them here to make sure that they are healthy before adoption.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Susan. Always enjoy your annual visit.

Any questions or comments from members of the committee?

Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Thank you.

Susan, when you deal with the animals in your organization, do you treat them for parasites?

SUSAN B. LINKER: Yes.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Okay. Because I know another person who adopted one of these southern dogs and to her dismay the dog was loaded up with heartworm and she had no idea when she took it home.

SUSAN B. LINKER: Sure. And just to clarify, our companions is not in the business of importing animals. We are the organization that helps the animals right here in Connecticut. Imagine that. However our members are in the business of doing this -- and I shouldn't even say business. They rescue animals from out of state.

And just to define the reason why I think that's important, it's because they're looking to make money. There's a demand here for small animals and puppies and we've done a great job spaying at neutering. This isn't going to stop. Our interest is to create regulation so people will, you know, participate in making sure that what they do is within the line of the law and not making it so onerous that drives us further underground to the detriment of the animals.

REP. MUSHINSKY: No. But I'm just trying to get a procedure question. Is it generally considered best practice to check animals for parasites and treat them?

SUSAN B. LINKER: Absolutely. The best practice is

to microchip them, to heartworm test them, Lyme test them, leukemia (inaudible) test them. Make sure that they are free from parasites and sterilize them.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Okay. Thank you.

SUSAN B. LINKER: And vaccinate them.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And it's good to see you, Susan. I think what you're saying here is that there is a unique difference between someone who is rescuing five or six dogs and someone who is trying bringing in a hundred dogs. And that we need to honor and recognize that distinction and try not to take that small person like the gentleman that was rescuing the Siamese cats. And as you already said, push them underground.

Do you believe we can separate that out? And do you think that the part where we are addressing the smaller nonprofit rescue operations actually belongs under this title as a statute? I mean, maybe we need a separate -- if you'd comment --

SUSAN B. LINKER: I believe that the requirements for -- if animals are going to be imported into the state, should be the same for any organization that is importing five animals or 500 animals, because it should be based on making sure animals are healthy when they come in, that the way they get imported is responsible and that when they are adopted to new families, that they are healthy and that

there's an organization that's accountable.

And that there also is an organization five years down the road that will be there for the animals if they ever need to be re-homed. That is what reputable organizations do. I don't see how that's really possible when you're, you know, adopting out 600 animals in a weekend and you do that several times a year.

So I think there is a distinction about how you uphold the standards for rescue when you're handling that volume of animals, but I do think it should be what we should expect for our animals, especially those that we bring into the state.

REP. URBAN: I think you make a very good point about how you possibly do it when you're bringing in that large a number of animals at once.

And I do see on your testimony that you do have some suggestions for how we could be assured that the animals that we're bringing into Connecticut -- and I like to go back and applaud our Companion Animals for taking care of our Connecticut animals.

And Indiana Jones --

SUSAN B. LINKER: There's a lot of good ones in our shelters.

REP. URBAN: Right. And Indiana Jones sends his best. Give Indy a kiss.

For those who don't know, he's my rescue from Our Companion Animals.

So on the issues that you have -- that you've

outlined here, do you believe that that will give us the opportunity to be sure that animals coming in are healthy?

SUSAN B. LINKER: Coming in are healthy, but most importantly, before they are adopted. I believe a licensed vet should give them the green light to be adopted.

What I've seen in these adoption events are animals being adopted on site that have mange, that are very sick, that are underweight, that are, you know, infested with parasites. This should not -- these animals should not be going into families.

And by making sure there's a vet to approve them healthy for adoption basically creates a mechanism to have an individual or rescue organization that's accountable for them in Connecticut. And I think that's a point that we all agree upon.

REP. URBAN: If I could just make one more comment Mr. Chairman?

This, you know, as you know, I am the results-based accountability person here. And what results-based accountability starts with agreeing on ends. And I think we have agreed on the ends that we're trying to achieve here. I think it's just a question of the means and how do we actually get there. So I think that's a good -- something to recognize and know that we can go forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments?

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Susan thank you for all of your hard work on behalf of our animals. And again, and congratulate you for, you know, paying attention to our local animals, not the ones we need to bring in from out of state.

And I agree with Representative Urban, you know. We both understand the problem. We want to get there. And again, as mentioned earlier, I think the lemon law is a great example of us, you know, converging our minds and making sure that we get a result that fits.

You've submitted in your testimony the -- that the dog must be examined by a Connecticut licensed vet. Do you think that would take care of the majority of the problems and perhaps dissuade some of the hundred, multiple hundred, you know, importers from doing -- from bringing all these animals in?

SUSAN B. LINKER: I think it would cost them some money. And investing in the animals that you have is a self-limiting factor and I think that's important. It makes them less a commodity, and as more of individuals that require individual attention.

REP. HURLBURT: Uh-huh. We asked -- or I asked a previous speaker, you know, how do we differentiate between the for-profit and the rescue type organizations. You know, we want to make sure that we're getting at the bad actors. And I'm, you know, I would imagine that there's some rescue people who aren't the best actors, you know, aren't taking as good care of their animals as some of our vets and

some of the people who testified in how Our Companions does.

How do we get at those people to make sure that they're being held responsible for bringing, you know, animals into the state that are safe, that are healthy and then, you know finding a home for the and making sure? And making sure that the family that ends up with the animal, you know, doesn't have this disease-ridden, you know, animal on their hands to take care of.

SUSAN B. LINKER: I think by establishing -- having a vet certify them healthy enough for adoption creates, first of all, a time for them to land here in Connecticut, settle somewhere and have them seen by a vet. That would require that there's an organization that is (inaudible) these animals in somewhere and there's an institution behind them. I think that will have a lot to do with it. That way, you know, vets are on record and that there was an owner on the record in Connecticut for these animals. And I think it really starts with the ownership and accountability.

I -- it's horrifying to think that -- and I've seen this, you know, where the truck pulls up. It opens up and puppies are just passed off. I think that is condemnable behavior and anyone who's doing rescue -- these are not products. And as soon as you hand off animals right there, at a point of purchase on the highway, there no longer is a Connecticut rescue organization that's connected with these animals and I think that that's necessary and I think that needs to address it.

If I might just add one more, you know, concern that we have -- and Peter had

mentioned this, too. The Section E in the language that's there, while I understand the intent of it, requires that a commissioner can at any time inspect these pet shops. And under which we'd be considered a pet shop. Please know that a lot of these animals go into foster homes when they settle in, like in Peter's home.

And to have these warrantless searches of individuals' private property I think it's something that we should be really -- we should caution against them. It's something we're concerned about, how it's drafted. I know that's not the intent per se, but I'm afraid it might read that way and I just wanted to say that for the record.

But I think the vet care people certifying them adoptable would help tremendously. It also creates some financial responsibility for these organizations, to make them well enough to get to a healthy state to be adopted.

REP. HURLBURT: And thank you. And those are good points. And Section E, I think, does need to be addressed.

One of our previous speakers spoke about the SPCA and they brought in, you know, they had a fair or something and they had all of these animals. And the SPCA seemed to be kind of the pass-through agencies. Is there a lot of that going through?

SUSAN B. LINKER: I don't consider them a pass-through agency. They bring the animals here. They, you know, adopt them on their own contracts. They legally have the ownership of these animals and pass it on to a member of the public when they adopt them.

It's not the same as off the bus. It's somewhere a little bit better, I guess. I think that -- I've been to a lot of these events and I've seen animals in very bad physical condition that were available for adoption. I actually didn't sleep that night when I went to visit one of these adoption events. It's very disturbing to see animals treated like commodities like this.

REP. HURLBURT: Uh-huh.

SUSAN B. LINKER: Hundreds and hundreds of animals commingling and mixed. It really was an animal husbandry nightmare to walk into one of these events.

So I think that by creating standards for proper pet care and accountability it will, by itself, allow the -- restrict these huge, massive adoption events because you're not going to be able to properly vet check and treat 600 animals in one weekend. It's going to require things to slow down and take the time to provide some individual care.

REP. HURLBURT: And there's -- the Department of Ag doesn't oversee this? The local municipalities? Animal control? Like in the SPCA --

SUSAN B. LINKER: I've heard -- the Department of Agriculture, state animal control officers and local animal control officers to accompany, on my visits to these adoption events. They often are on the weekend and there aren't agents that are working. So I haven't had a chance to bring anyone with me, but I would love for the department to see some of this activity.

REP. HURLBURT: All right. Well, Susan thank you,

again for your testimony and your continued advocacy.

And again, I think, you know, we agree on the problem. And I look forward -- I know you're more than willing to help out and make sure that we get to a solution that, you know, benefits everybody. So thank you.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments for Susan?
Sue, Thank you very much.

SUSAN B. LINKER: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Next speaker is Claude Brouillard who will take us up to item 15, House Bill 5376 and he will be followed by Kathy DeMarco.

CLAUDE BROUILLARD: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and committee, committee members. My name is Claude Brouillard and I'm the owner of the 59-acre horse farm located at 152 Town Farm Road, Farmington, Connecticut, known as the Farmington Polo Grounds. I'm speaking here today in opposition to House Bill 5376, the community farm bill and Senate Bill 207, the greenhouse bill.

As an owner of a farm I support preserving Connecticut farms, but especially our dairy farms for they are at the greatest risk of being turned into track housing. The economics of dairy farming makes it such that it's extremely difficult to keep these farms operational.

I am in opposition to these two bills as written because they don't -- they do not put

**JOINT
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**ENVIRONMENT
PART 5
1371 – 1695**

2011

HB 5368: Testimony of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, February 23, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you in support of House Bill 5368. My name is Gayle Block and I am a practicing Veterinarian in Connecticut.

I would like to address this bill from an ethical point of view. Let me begin by saying I have always felt more of an obligation to my patients, the animals, than my clients. I believe it is my highest responsibility to act in the best interests of my patients and I have always taken that responsibility very seriously. That being said let me say unequivocally, we are not against the adoption of animals that are in need of homes. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, my own dog came from the Bridgeport municipal pound. I am a huge proponent of adopting from shelters and pounds.

Since the State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture began the Animal Population Control Program more than 15 years ago; we have seen many more adoptions occur from shelters and the euthanasia of unowned animals decrease significantly. This program promotes the spaying or neutering of animals adopted from municipal pounds. That success, however, doesn't mean that the problem of pet overpopulation in Connecticut is solved or that there are not still many animals without homes that are euthanized.

This bill would in no way prevent the adoption of animals from in our state or out of state. It would only create responsibility among those involved in arranging adoptions and promote in state adoptions first.

Unfortunately, with no laws directly governing the importation of companion animals into Connecticut we have seen many problems occur, including significant health issues. Intestinal parasites, heartworm disease, respiratory and dermatologic illnesses and malnutrition are just a few of them. I personally have seen more cases of heartworm disease these past few years than I can ever remember. Worse, many of these illnesses are contagious to the pets already living in the State of Connecticut.

In many cases, because these animals are essentially sold directly from transport vehicles, there is no recourse for the adoptive family that has usually paid hundreds of dollars for their new pet. They then become saddled with the financial burden of treatment and if they can't afford treatment they may then relinquish them to local animal control facilities that are not able to treat them either, and they are euthanized.

In fact, animal trafficking has become so lucrative that some are breeding specifically for transport to the north. It is outrageous that, we still must kill thousands of healthy, adoptable cats and dogs due to pet overpopulation, while some profit from so called rescue. Meanwhile people are paying exorbitant amounts of money for so called adoption donations, not knowing and understanding that there has been no oversight to this process.

The transportation itself may be inhumane, by packing too many animals together in one transport vehicle, not stopping often enough or at all to provide clean water and food, not

cleaning their cages and leaving them in their own excrement, and lacking temperature control. There can be 100 animals in one vehicle alone. There have even been instances of cats being transported here for adoption. In this state, there is no doubt in my mind that cat overpopulation far outnumbers the dog overpopulation. In one shelter not 10 miles from here, there are over 100 cats needing homes. There are also many thousands of feral cats that breed a number of times in a season leaving us with more and more unwanted cats. Very few municipalities deal with this stray cat population. Shouldn't we be taking care of business in our own state first? Don't we all have a responsibility to see that these pets transported into Connecticut are healthy and treated humanely?

Those that truly care about the health, well being and placement of unowned animals will continue to do so while working within the confines of our laws. Importers should be made to comply with the same laws that legitimate in state adoption agencies, pet stores and breeders do.

Thank you

Gayle Block, DVM
Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association

February 23, 2011

Testimony Concerning Proposed Bill 6320
Susan B. Linker, Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary
Vice President, CT Votes for Animals
Member, Animal Welfare Federation of CT

Members of the Environment Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 5368, AN ACT EXTENDING PET SHOP LICENSE REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPORT ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION

Our Organizations supports the concept of appropriate regulation of the importation of dogs and cats in Connecticut, but we cannot support the proposal contained within House Bill 5368.

Our primary objection to this proposal is that it presumes that people who bring cats or dogs into Connecticut are "businesses" who make profits from this activity. This presumption is evidenced by the fact that the bill inserts all people who bring cats or dogs into Connecticut into the pet store business licensing statutes and the statutes involving other businesses, including commercial kennels, grooming facilities and training facilities.

The vast majority of the people who import animals are compassionate people who bring cats and dogs into CT as a form of rescue. They are not businesses and do not make or attempt to make any profits. As a matter of fact, I suspect that most folks (like myself) lose money on rescuing, rehabilitating and adopting animals. Accordingly we rely on the work of volunteers and charitable contributions to make our work possible. Most of us are truly not-for-profit charitable organizations whose missions are to help animals find good homes with nice families – not to make profits.

Of course, we certainly understand that there are a few people/operations in Connecticut who do appear to run large-scale importation "businesses;" and are for all intents and purposes they are acting as pet stores—and they probably should be regulated as pet stores (we have all heard the stories of large-scale pet sales events occurring in parking lots and shopping malls and animals being "adopted" off the back of big trucks as they just arrive into CT).

The rescue community is deeply concerned about that type of activity and we believe fair, humane and thoughtful regulation will help identify and regulate those organizations who are not putting the welfare of the animals as the first priority.

It's my understanding from the proponents of this bill that the actual intent of the bill is to regulate these large-scale importation businesses. We agree. But the problem with this bill is that it would regulate these big businesses in the same exact way as it would regulate my small nonprofit rescue organization, and many other small rescue organizations.

That all being said, we do in fact believe that the whenever a cat or dog is brought into Connecticut, the following rules should be followed by everyone – the large scale importers and the small rescue organization or the individual person:

1. Before bringing a cat or dog into Connecticut, the person must obtain a certificate of health from a licensed veterinarian in the place of origin stating that the cat or dog is healthy enough to be transported into Connecticut, and if old enough, the cat or dog is vaccinated against rabies (this is

essentially already the law under section 22-354).

2. Once the cat or dog arrives in Connecticut – and before the cat or dog can be sold or adopted, the person must have the cat or dog examined by a Connecticut-licensed Veterinarian and the dog or cat cannot be sold or transferred to anyone until the Connecticut vet certifies that the cat or dog is healthy. This is a very strong and appropriate requirement to ensure health and safety.
3. All cats or dogs brought into Connecticut from another place must be spayed or neutered (unless a licensed Vet certifies that the animal cannot undergo such surgery).
4. Within 30 days of the cat or dog being examined in Connecticut by a Connecticut-licensed Vet, then the person who brought the dog or cat into Connecticut must file the 3 Vets certificates with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (the certificate from the Vet in the place of origin, the certificate from the CT Vet, and the certificate showing spay/neuter).
5. The person must maintain copies of these certificates for 2 years as proof of compliance and the person can be penalized by the Department of Agriculture for failure to maintain the records.
6. Any person who intends to offer for sale or adoption any dogs or cats who have already been imported into this state at a public venue such as a parking lot or a shopping center, shall notify the local chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which such public venue is located at least three days prior to the sale or adoption event. Failure to notify the chief law enforcement officer can result in a fine.

We would certainly be open to discussions with members of the Committee and with all interested parties.

On behalf of the animal welfare and protection community, I urge you to support an appropriate amendment to this legislation.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony.

Susan B. Linker, Bloomfield, CT 06002, SusanL@OurCompanions.org, 860-372-8915

HB 5368: Testimony of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, February 23, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you in support of House Bill 5368. My name is Gayle Block and I am a practicing Veterinarian in Connecticut.

I would like to address this bill from an ethical point of view. Let me begin by saying I have always felt more of an obligation to my patients, the animals, than my clients. I believe it is my highest responsibility to act in the best interests of my patients and I have always taken that responsibility very seriously. That being said let me say unequivocally, we are not against the adoption of animals that are in need of homes. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, my own dog came from the Bridgeport municipal pound. I am a huge proponent of adopting from shelters and pounds.

Since the State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture began the Animal Population Control Program more than 15 years ago; we have seen many more adoptions occur from shelters and the euthanasia of unowned animals decrease significantly. This program promotes the spaying or neutering of animals adopted from municipal pounds. That success, however, doesn't mean that the problem of pet overpopulation in Connecticut is solved or that there are not still many animals without homes that are euthanized.

This bill would in no way prevent the adoption of animals from in our state or out of state. It would only create responsibility among those involved in arranging adoptions and promote in state adoptions first.

Unfortunately, with no laws directly governing the importation of companion animals into Connecticut we have seen many problems occur, including significant health issues. Intestinal parasites, heartworm disease, respiratory and dermatologic illnesses and malnutrition are just a few of them. I personally have seen more cases of heartworm disease these past few years than I can ever remember. Worse, many of these illnesses are contagious to the pets already living in the State of Connecticut.

In many cases, because these animals are essentially sold directly from transport vehicles, there is no recourse for the adoptive family that has usually paid hundreds of dollars for their new pet. They then become saddled with the financial burden of treatment and if they can't afford treatment they may then relinquish them to local animal control facilities that are not able to treat them either, and they are euthanized.

In fact, animal trafficking has become so lucrative that some are breeding specifically for transport to the north. It is outrageous that, we still must kill thousands of healthy, adoptable cats and dogs due to pet overpopulation, while some profit from so called rescue. Meanwhile people are paying exorbitant amounts of money for so called adoption donations, not knowing and understanding that there has been no oversight to this process.

The transportation itself may be inhumane, by packing too many animals together in one transport vehicle, not stopping often enough or at all to provide clean water and food, not

cleaning their cages and leaving them in their own excrement, and lacking temperature control. There can be 100 animals in one vehicle alone. There have even been instances of cats being transported here for adoption. In this state, there is no doubt in my mind that cat overpopulation far outnumbers the dog overpopulation. In one shelter not 10 miles from here, there are over 100 cats needing homes. There are also many thousands of feral cats that breed a number of times in a season leaving us with more and more unwanted cats. Very few municipalities deal with this stray cat population. Shouldn't we be taking care of business in our own state first? Don't we all have a responsibility to see that these pets transported into Connecticut are healthy and treated humanely?

Those that truly care about the health, well being and placement of unowned animals will continue to do so while working within the confines of our laws. Importers should be made to comply with the same laws that legitimate in state adoption agencies, pet stores and breeders do.

Thank you

Gayle Block, DVM
Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association

Testimony of Donna Keegan in support of HB 5368

Attention to Chairman Roy, Chairman Meyer and members of the Environment Committee:

I adopted a 2 year old Chihuahua back on March 13, 2008 from North Shore Animal League in New York when their van came to Southbury, CT. To my understanding; my dog was in perfect health. I was told he was a rescue from Tennessee and that he had been neutered, given shots and checked for heartworm, which he was negative. I immediately took my dog for a check-up at my veterinarian, Prospect-Wolcott Veterinary in Prospect and he checked out fine. They had also provided Heartgard for my dog to protect him from heartworm, which I started immediately. Two weeks later my dog had developed kennel cough and was really sick. I brought him to my veterinarian, where they provided medication for my dog and he was good within a week. They also suggested that I make a follow up appointment in September of 2008. I brought my dog in for his follow up and they routinely tested him for heartworm. My dog tested positive. This was devastating to both of us. One because I was unaware that I had a sick dog and two because he was new to us and our home and it put a lot of emotional pressure on him as well being at the vet for nearly 4 days. My instructions were to keep him in a quiet environment so he could heal properly. This was a hard task on both of us too because he is a very active dog and couldn't understand why he couldn't play. He felt like he was being punished. Not only that but the financial costs, which came to almost \$1,000.00, were hard to meet but they put me on a payment plan to make it a little easier.

Since then, my dog has been a very healthy, happy and fun individual due to proper caring of my dog. What we had to go through prior, I feel was from improper care and screening. I wanted to voice my experience to you in hopes to avoid a situation for future adopted individuals.

Best Regards,

Donna Keegan

203-217-1950

February 23, 2011

CGA Environment Committee

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Environment Committee Members, Interested Legislators,

My name is Barbara St. John and I write in favor of HB5368.

In November 2009 I adopted a dog, Amber, through a rescue organization "SPARE", with contact personnel in Arkansas. I paid a donation of \$250.00 for the dog in advance and had to sign a hold harmless agreement on behalf of the rescue organization. The dog was represented to me as healthy, other than a minor intestinal parasite infection, which was reported to have been treated prior to delivery to me.

The dog was delivered by a commercial trailer company, "Alpha Dog Transport", to a commuter parking lot adjacent to Interstate 84 near Waterbury. Many dozens of dogs were delivered in the same way that day, and I was aware that such deliveries take place weekly at that location and others. The delivery process had the atmosphere of an outdoor event with several intermediaries gathering small groups of their own "clients" for a pre-arrival briefing. Once the trailer arrived a line was formed and dogs and new owners were paired. In some cases I saw money changing hands on the spot. I estimated that over 75 people had dogs delivered to them that day.

When I picked up my new dog I was not informed the dog had any medical problems, though I did notice a sparse coat in areas of her body. Three days later, upon seeing my veterinarian I learned the dog had demodectic mange, and in a generalized form which is costly to treat and may not be curable at all. Now, over a year down the road, the demodectic mange is still under treatment and far from cured.

While I love my dog and I am doing all I can to help her get well, it is clear to me that the rescue organization with which I dealt is focused solely on shipping as many dogs as possible and collecting as many donations as possible. There is no regard for the health of the animals shipped, for other pets new owners may already have or for the financial burden placed upon new owners when they are handed the leash to a new pet with an expensive illness.

I am fortunate to be able to afford the treatment required for Amber, however, it is certainly also true that many others would not be able to do so. In at least some of these latter cases, I suspect sick, imported animals end up back in shelters here and are eventually euthanized. No one is going to adopt a sick animal over a healthy one, especially when the eventual outcome is unknown.

In fairness to animals already needing homes in Connecticut, and to those here now that could be exposed to disease by imported animals, it seems to me that organizations and individuals importing animals into Connecticut should play by the same animal health rules as pet shops and other for profit businesses that do the same. Animal health and consumer protection should come before profits. All arriving animals, regardless of who arranges their delivery, should be examined and owners assured of their health upon arrival. Owners should have recourse when health problems exist. Thank you

Sincerely,

Barbara St. John
32 Secret Mountain Trail
Canton, CT 06019
(860) 693-6446
bstj2@aol.com

Chairman Roy, Chairman Meyer and Members of the Environment Committee,

My name is Juliana Ely and I am here today to testify in support of HB 5368.

On Friday, December 10th my husband and I went to the SPCA adoption fair in Farmington, CT, where we found our little Bessie. She was very small and very thin, to the point you could see all her back bones and hip bones. She is a 1-2 year old beagle with a big heart and loved the attention my husband and I gave her from outside the pen. Although she was very thin we decided that we would take her home and give her some groceries to fatten her up. We paid the \$325.00 adoption fee and took her home.

On Monday, December 13th, I made an appointment with my vet, Higganum Vet, as I was very concerned with her health. She only weighed 12 lbs, which meant she had lost 4lbs, 1/4 her body weight from being transported from Dalton Ga. On December 8th. Her papers indicated that she was 16 lb. She had a fever of over 105, was dehydrated, anemic, and loaded with whip worms. I made a call to the vet in Georgia, to get more information and found out that Bessie had been spayed on December 7th and put on the transport vehicle on the 8th. I asked them why she was transported so quickly after her surgery and was told she had a better chance of being adopted in CT.

On Tuesday the 14th, chest x-rays were taken and was determined that she had a bad case of pneumonia, and was suggested that we take her to the 24 hour Emergency Vet in Rocky Hill as she would need 24 hour care to treat her. On Thursday the 16th, we were able to bring her home with instructions to continue breathing treatments every 4 hours for 2 weeks along with heavy doses of antibiotics, and schedule follow up visits with our vet.

I did make contact with the SPCA regarding Bessie and the gentleman I spoke with said there was nothing they could do. I had the option to take her to their vet but they were broke. He had a very defensive tone. The only thing I really wanted was to make them aware of Bessie's condition and warn them that other dogs that were in the pen with her or near her may become sick. He did tell me that they did have other sick dogs, he stated that this is not the fault of the SPCA and they go on the word of the vets or shelters where these dogs are coming from that the dogs are healthy.

It is my opinion that these animals are the SPCA's responsibility the minute they are put on the transport vehicle and should be looked at more carefully when they arrive here before being put up for adoption. If someone would have reviewed Bessie's health papers they would have noticed the weight loss and maybe caught that she was very sick. I signed a contract that I would give Bessie her forever home but on the other side of that I also signed a health care policy that states the SPCA makes every effort to insure the health of all pets prior to adoption. It is my opinion that they failed this in Bessie's case.

As of today Bessie is doing much better, she has gained weight, 7 ½ lbs, and continues to go for check ups. This has been an unexpected financial expense of just under \$2,500.00 to date for my family. I honestly believe this is a good thing the SPCA is doing however we need to make sure that this type of situation doesn't happen to other families who may not be in the position to pay these bills and go through the emotional stress of dealing with such a sick animal.

Sincerely,

Juliana Ely
47 Morris Hubbard Rd.
Higganum, CT 06441
(860) 301-2566

HB 5368: Testimony of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, February 2011

Mister/Madam Chairman, Members of the CGA Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding HB 5368. I represent the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, which includes over 95% of Connecticut-licensed veterinarians among its members.

We believe HB 5368 is a necessary and measured approach to addressing the growing problem of unregulated transport of animals into Connecticut. These animals are imported in a manner which ensures they remain hidden from oversight by Connecticut animal health authorities and further, they often have undeclared health problems which lead to disease exposure for Connecticut animals and unexpected veterinary medical costs for unsuspecting animal owners.

For several years, and especially since the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster, an informal, unregulated industry has developed which functions to move animals into the State of Connecticut from other states. This industry is known as "pet rescue." Primarily through web sites, Connecticut citizens interested in adopting an out-of-state pet may arrange for its delivery into Connecticut without oversight by Connecticut animal health authorities and without advance examination by a Connecticut licensed veterinarian. Often, intermediaries based in Connecticut or elsewhere, facilitate animal importation without having physical custody of the animals, and in most cases without them ever having custody. The transport process is accomplished by commercial delivery companies and private drivers that shuttle dogs a few hundred miles each, transferring animals to the next driver at pre-determined rendezvous points. There are also general aviation pilots and at least three general aviation organizations that have "pet rescue" as their primary function.

Dogs enter the transport network from out-of-state municipal pounds, private out-of-state brick-and-mortar shelters, private out-of-state individual "rescue" organizations or through individuals associated with such groups, individuals or groups involved with a particular breed "foster" care and from sales directly from commercial breeding operations. Indeed, some animals are bred specifically for transport and characterization of these animals as needing rescue is misleading.

A close look at pet transport reveals a plethora of unintended and negative consequences including inhumane animal welfare practices, circumvention of disease control regulations and questionable financial transactions that harm Connecticut animal owners and animals. These include:

1. Animals arrive with undisclosed diseases & deformities and new owners are subject to unexpected and unrecoverable costs of veterinary care, as well as exposing animals they already own to disease. Novel diseases may travel with these animals and these pose an emergent risk to animal and/or public health, risks local veterinarians and physicians may not immediately recognize. Animal owners often have no recourse and may also feel guilty about complaining about an animal's undisclosed medical conditions. Some of these animals are then surrendered to animal shelters here.
2. Connecticut-source animals located in Connecticut brick & mortar shelters and municipal pounds are passed over for adoption when large numbers of out-of-state animals are imported. Connecticut citizens thus indirectly subsidize mitigation of animal control issues in exporting states while our animal control costs are higher, because Connecticut source animals remain in shelter longer and are harder to find homes for. Some of these must wait long periods for adoption and/or are euthanized.

Thus continued unregulated animal importation exposes Connecticut animals to disease, is unfair to citizens surprised by undisclosed medical issues and the costs to treat these, is inhumane To Connecticut source animals by decreasing their chance of adoption and shifts the cost of animal control activities from other states to our state. HB 5368 will allow animal health officials to control animal importation, prevent disease transmission, help ensure humane transport standards, protect Connecticut animal owners and animals, reduce Connecticut animal control costs and minimize the surrender of newly imported animals. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Arnold L. Goldman DVM, MS
Eva Ceranowicz DVM
Robert Belden DVM
Gayle Block DVM
Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – February 23, 2010
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Amey Marrella
Department of Environmental Protection

House Committee Bill No. 5364 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN FISHING BY A NONLICENSED STATE RESIDENT UNDER THE FISHING LICENSE OF A STATE RESIDENT.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding House Committee Bill No. 5364 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN FISHING BY A NONLICENSED STATE RESIDENT UNDER THE FISHING LICENSE OF A STATE RESIDENT. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) supports this bill as it will complement the agency's "No Child Left Inside" program and other initiatives that strive to connect Connecticut's citizens with the outdoors and our natural resources.

This bill provides a simple and free opportunity for Connecticut recreational anglers to directly share their knowledge and passion for angling with friends, relatives, and colleagues. This is one of the most effective ways of introducing new participants to the relaxing and stress-free experience of fishing. This legislation will aid in developing new supporters for our conservation programs and our environment.

The Department does wish to offer the following substitute language (italicized) that will enable the Department to meet federal registry requirements and our goals for increasing participation:

(NEW) (i) The Commissioner of Environmental Protection shall designate one *or more days* in each calendar year *for which a free one-day license may be issued for sport fishing* to a resident of this state provided such resident, while fishing on such designated day, is accompanied by a resident of this state who has a resident fishing license issued by the commissioner.

The proposed revision provides for a free one day license on designated "Free Fishing Days." By requiring the un-licensed resident to obtain a DEP one day license, the Department can collect the information required to meet the terms of Connecticut's exemption from the National Saltwater Angler Registry. Under this exemption, Connecticut's marine anglers are not required to register in the federal system (currently a \$15.00 registration fee). The provisions of this bill, as currently written, could lead to loss of the State's exemption. Additionally, the free license requirement would provide the Department with contact information from potential new customers and with a larger target audience for delivery of our educational and outreach materials.

Page 1 of 2

February 23, 2011

From: Laura "Peach" Reid, Owner & President, Fish Mart Inc.

Re: Testimony Before the Environment Committee on Bill no. 5367, An Act Extending Certain Pet Shop Licensee Requirements that Import Animals for Adoption

Mr. Chairmen and Members of the Environment Committee,

I am here today to testify in favor of Committee Bill No 5368, with clarifying revision and a suggestion for your consideration.

It is gratifying to see that the committee supports standards for licensing and regulating all parties who import animals for adoption. This helps protect both the animals and the persons who adopt them as pets, making them members of their family.

As you know, here in CT, the standards of excellence for puppies and kittens in pet shops has served as a national model. I am pleased to have worked with this committee, the Pet Advisory Joint Advisory Council (PJAC), the Department of Agriculture, and other interested parties over the years in forming these high standards and expanding on them over time. We are proud that the pet shops in CT who sell puppies and kittens helped develop and are proud to comply with such high standards and requirements.

At this time, the public is protected only if they buy puppies and kittens from pet shops. There is a guarantee with every puppy and kitten sold, which provides the consumer with various options and reimbursements regarding the health of the animals. Pet shop puppies account for perhaps just 10 per cent of all puppies sold in the state. It has long been the pet industry's position that the standards we are proud to abide by should be the same for all puppies and kittens sold, whoever or whatever the source.

This bill would license and regulate entities that import these animals into the state for adoption. This bill would make sure that certain health requirements occur – that any animal offered for adoption would require veterinary examination prior to sale and every 14 days until sold, and the maintenance of these records. Who couldn't support that?

I have two concerns, however. One is to ensure that the brokers pet shops use for the importation of their puppies and kittens into the state are not inadvertently included in this bill. As I said, only pet shop puppies and kittens are so extensively regulated. This is my primary concern. I know PIJAC would be happy to assist in any language clarification that may be required on this.

The other concern is perhaps more a suggestion - why not go one step further and have adopting agencies have a guarantee for the consumer like pet shops do? There are many incidents of adopted animals having parasites, viral or bacterial infections, or other physical ailments, and there is no recourse for the consumer who adopted the animal.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Testimony presented to the Environment Committee of
The Connecticut General Assembly
By the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Steven K. Reviczky
2/23/11

H.B. 5508 AAC THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

H.B. 6402 AAC THE REQUISITE NUMBER OF POULTRY FOR CERTAIN
APPROVED FOOD SOURCES UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH CODE

S.B. 992 AAC CONNECTICUT WINE FESTIVALS

S.B. 993 AAC FAIR ADVERTISING FOR CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL
TOURISM

S.B. 994 AA AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CONNECTICUT WINE AT
FARMERS' MARKETS AND ESTABLISHING A FARMERS' MARKET WINE
PERMIT

S.B. 207 AA AUTHORIZING THE INCLUSION OF NURSERIES AND
GREENHOUSES IN FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

H. B. 5368 AA EXTENDING CERTAIN PET SHOP LICENSEE
REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPORT
ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION

Good morning Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, Vice Chairs Maynard and Davis, Ranking Members Roraback and Chapin and distinguished members of the Environment Committee. My name is Steve Reviczky and I serve as Connecticut's Commissioner of Agriculture. It is a pleasure to be here this morning to share my thoughts on a wide range of Agriculture related proposals. In the interest of brevity it is my intention to offer a brief synopsis of thought on each bill and then make myself available for questions by the Committee and of course stay as long as the Committee requires.

to the greenhouse and nursery industry. There are concerns with the potential for troubling soil losses on farms protected under the Farmland Preservation Program with nursery crops harvested using the ball and burlap method. Recognizing the critical importance of Connecticut's green industry the Department looks forward to working with the industry to further development of best management practices supported by science, utilizing alternative techniques, switching to bare root operations and switching to pot-in-pot culture, so as not to diminish the arability of the agricultural soils.

And finally the Department is in favor of the concept of H.B.5368 An Act Extending Certain Pet Shop Licensee Requirements to Persons and Organizations that Import Animals for Adoption. The Department of Agriculture receives numerous complaints from the public regarding animals that enter Connecticut from other states and countries that have significant health issues. Respiratory problems and parasite infections are common. The Department has followed up on some of these complaints and has found animals are sometimes adopted out of shipping containers in parking lots, often without the required current health certificates and exhibiting signs of disease. Currently the Department has no authority to regulate the importation of these animals other than to require current rabies vaccination and health certificates. This weakens the state's ability to control the introduction of non-endemic disease and parasites. The current situation poses significant risk to the state's human population through the potential introduction of zoonotic diseases and also threatens the state's companion animal population. The Department of

Agriculture seeks to strengthen existing companion animal importation law in order to minimize these risks. The Department seeks a dialogue with animal rescue organizations in an effort to control the importation of disease with dogs entering the state and to prevent the practice of trafficking in dogs for profit. This bill serves as an important beginning point in resolving the issues that separate rescue organizations and the Department of Agriculture on this critical issue.

H – 1105

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL.54
PART 14
4474 – 4836**

House Bill 6238 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting	146
Necessary for passage	74
Those voting Yea	95
Those voting Nay	51
Those absent and not voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The bill as amended passes.

Would the Clerk please call Calendar 224

THE CLERK:

On page 40, Calendar 224, Substitute for House
Bill Number 5368, AN ACT EXTENDING CERTAIN PET SHOP
LICENSEE REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS
THAT IMPORT ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt of the 53rd, you have
the floor, sir.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Good -- good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Afternoon, sir.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

And I apologize for having my -- my mic request
on prior. We were a little jumping the gun a little

bit there so.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

We'll chalk it up to eagerness, sir.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Mr. Speaker, I move for the acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is passage of the bill.

Please proceed, sir.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has Amendment LCO 6985. I ask that he please call the amendment, and I be granted leave to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Would the Clerk please call LCO 6985, which shall be designated House Amendment Schedule "A."

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 6985, House "A" offered by Representative Hurlburt, Urban and Chapin.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The good Representative.

cd/rgd/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

187
May 25, 2011

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the --

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Hold it. Hold it. Someone keeps shutting my sound off so I have to stop midway. So please leave my sound alone so I can hear myself to make sure I know when I'm on.

Representative Hurlburt, begs leave of the Chamber to summarize. With seeing no objection to summarization, please proceed, sir.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm glad we got your microphone fixed.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment before us is a strike all amendment but stays true to the -- the underlying bill. Within the amendment, we define an animal importer. We create an animal importer license. We require a municipal notification of an event for the sale, transfer or adoption of animals, requires a veterinarian inspection of -- of an animal within 48 hours of bringing the animal into the state and requires maintenance of records of the animals that are brought into the state and -- and

sold so we have an accounting of that.

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is adoption on House "A."

Further on House "A"? Further on House "A"?

Representative Chapin of the 67th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you, some questions to the proponent, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In lines 72 through 94, it appears that we're creating a new registration for this group of individuals; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, as I read line 72, it says any dog or cat importer. Would that be importation for purely for the ownership of the animal, or would it include such things as for sale or adoption?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, it's for sale or adoption, not for personal ownership.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you.

I'm aware that there have been efforts to

create this sort of a registration in prior years and certainly one of the -- one of the issues that has always been a little contentious was whether or not we should make this include -- put in a certain threshold of those animals being imported before it goes into effect.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, does this have any such threshold or if somebody wanted to import one dog for sale or adoption, would they have to register?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And that's an excellent question. I thank the gentleman for asking it.

This -- this maintains for all importation, if you bring in one cat or dog or 500 cats or dogs. The push of the bill is to make sure that the animals that are coming into the state and offered for sale or for adoption to Connecticut residents are all healthy, regardless of the number that an individual brings in.

So, through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, I believe I heard the gentleman mention a provision in the bill before us that would require an examination by a veterinarian. Can he tell me when that provision goes into effect?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, another excellent question from the gentleman.

It has to happen no later than 48 hours of bringing the animal into the state. So you have 48 hours upon bringing the cat or dog into the state to get to your veterinarian or make the arrangements of the, you know, for it to have it ready to the veterinarian upon bringing the animal into the state.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, it's also my understanding that in order to import an animal into state under existing law, I believe that animal is supposed to be accompanied by a health certificate, and I -- I don't remember the time period prior to the importation that's required under law that it has to be examined. Can the gentleman refresh my memory on that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I am looking for that answer, but I believe it is 15 days, if I'm not mistaken.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I thank the gentleman for his answer.

In lines 95 through 106, it talks about adoption at outdoor locations, such as parking lots and shopping centers. Can the proponent tell me why it was important that this provision was included in the bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, the reason we included this provision was to make sure that we knew that it was happening that it gives an opportunity for inspection to take place and allow some municipality to prepare themselves for -- for such an event.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, through you, so under this provision somehow there's a requirement that the importer notify the municipality and, if so, who in the

municipality?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The requirement is that you notify the Department of Agriculture and the municipal zoning enforcement no later than 10 days prior to the -- to the event.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And finally, my last question, does this in any way impact those individuals who import animals for sale in a licensed and inspected pet store?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The answer is no that we have other

requirements for those -- for those pet shops.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

And Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his answers, as well as the co-introducers on this amendment. It has been a work in progress over a number of years, at times quite a contentious issue. I'm satisfied that all parties are in agreement that this is a wise thing to do, both to protect consumers, but equally as important, to protect animals being brought into the state. And I urge my colleagues to support the amendment, and once it's adopted, the amended bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Chapin.

Representative Alberts of the 50th district,
you have the floor.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If I may, a couple questions to the proponent
of the amendment?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

You surely may. Please proceed, sir.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just -- to clarify the language that begins in line 72 in terms of requiring a registration, am I to understand that if there is some change in some of the facts and, perhaps, the name or mailing address, that the one registration, the initial registration, may suffice that there's not the intent to require re-registration and resubmission of the fees?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, to the good gentleman from east of the river, their -- the requirement and the registration shall be valid through December 31st of the following year. Upon then, you would reapply and re-register, and if you had any changes, I'd suggest, at that point in time, it be done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So a one-time registration is really meant to stay in place for the whole year, and then upon the renewal, then the changes could be made.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, for legislative intent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And the answer is yes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, sir.

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And then going further into the amendment beginning at line 107, I'm getting kind tangled up here in terms some of the reading. I want to make sure I understand what an animal importer means by

definition. There are rescue agencies that will bring animals into the state for the sole purpose of bringing them from battered situations into homes which may be deemed to be much more loving environments for animals. I -- I don't believe that these animals are offered strictly for adoption. I think there may be some exchange to cover some rabies fees or some shots that the animals may have received before they were transported -- would -- for our purposes today, would those types of situations fall under this classification as an animal importer that needs to be registered?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And it is a good question.

As defined, an animal importer is anybody who offers for sale, adoption or transfer in exchange for any fee, sale, volunteer contribution, service or any other consideration through -- from lines 110 through 11, so if -- if it's any of those, you would have to meet the provisions of the -- of the

amendment as it is before us.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker.

And for clarification then, even if it's a nonprofit entity that does these things in exchange for the fees, it would be required to meet these requirements?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The answer is yes, and it goes to question that the ranking member of the Environment Committee asked earlier. There's no threshold. There is no exemption because we want to make sure that the cats and dogs that are being brought into the state are healthy and -- and -- and in good health for the -- for the people, for the consumers and for the animals' sake.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

And Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do thank the gentleman for his answers, and I will be supporting this.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Hovey of the 112th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. HOVEY (112th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I've believed for a long time that while there are individuals with great intentions who provide adoption services for dogs and cats throughout our state, there are also individuals who view it as big business and actually abuse the system as it has been set up. So the fact that we are now asking for registration allows our Department of Agriculture to be better able to enforce the laws and rules of animal protection, and it also allows the local municipalities to be able

to enforce those rules, too. And especially, down in Fairfield County, Connecticut, we've recently had an outbreak of K-9 pneumonia, which hasn't been seen for a number of years, and several of the veterinarians are hypothesizing that it has to do with the importation of animals who are not certified as being well, and then they're socializing at dog parks and things with other animals. So I believe very strongly that this is important legislation. I encourage everyone to vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Hovey.

Representative Miner of the 66th district, you have the floor, sir.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you -- thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon.

I have a couple of questions, if I might, to the proponent of the bill -- the amendment, I guess?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On line 119, there's some language there that talks about the process by which the commissioner of Agriculture would, I guess, inspect an animal. If the gentleman could help me, if -- if I was an importer of a dog and I chose not to let the commissioner of Agriculture into my home, but I was a registered importer, what's the process from there?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, this is a great question, something that we spent a lot of time on discussing during the -- the drafting of the bill.

Essentially, if -- if -- if the gentleman's example is he has a dog, he is not willing to let the commissioner or -- or an inspector come into his home to -- to -- to check the dog, you have the option of bringing the dog outside for inspection. If you refuse that, there would be the -- the Department would have its current standards of going through and getting a court order and asking to --

to inspect the animal that way. But that's a great question, and something that we did hear a lot about.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm remembering, as well, this process that this -- this bill has gone through over the years. And I do remember that people were concerned about open access to a residence. And so as I understand the gentleman, there is currently, in law, a process by which the Department of Agriculture could gain access if I chose not to let them, but that would be through the courts. It wouldn't -- wouldn't be a theoretically a knock on the door at ten o'clock at night; is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

Could the good gentleman, please repeat his

question? I'm sorry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Miner, would you care to repeat your question, sir?

REP. MINER (66th):

Certainly. Hopefully, I'll get the time right.

I just want to be sure that under current law, there is a process by which the Department of Agriculture could gain access if they felt there was a reason to do so and that would be a legal process, through the courts, not just a knock on the door, which I think most people were concerned about that at any time somebody from the Department of Agriculture could just show up and say here I am, show me the dog, show me the cage, and so on.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I -- I thank the gentleman for taking the time to -- to ask the question again.

The answer is yes. There is a process in place and it would be followed, in this instance, as in

any other instance for a similar circumstance.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And the word "importation" contemplates animals coming from outside of the state; is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And the answer is yes, anywhere outside of state and we -- in the language, in line 109, we use the term "sovereign entity" because we know that some of these animals come from different nations and different, if you will, commonwealths of the -- of the United States, so anywhere from outside of the state would apply.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And lastly, the issue of fostering, I remember back when my wife and I were looking for a dog and -- and I was amazed that how many times I got on the Internet looking for a certain breed and found that after visiting a home, I would be told that someone was fostering an animal. So theoretically, under this bill as its proposed -- or under the amendment as is proposed, that circumstance would be handled similarly to sale or any other transfer. Fostering is not some loophole under which people come out from underneath the statute; is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, it would be -- if you are fostering, you would still have to have a parent organization that would be responsible under the provisions before us. It is not a loophole, but there is still some responsibility for the care of the animal. And we do appreciate all the good people in the state of Connecticut who take the time

and care to foster their animals.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As do I, I think the -- the points that have been made here this afternoon are that just because you're an importer or just because you care enough to foster, doesn't mean that we should care less about the care of the animal. And I think that's what this bill is about. And I'm happy to know that all the proponents that have worked on it have been able to work through the issues that have been stumbling blocks for a couple of years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Miner.

Representative Lavielle, do you care to comment on House A?

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just have a few questions for clarification, if I may? Through you.

In terms of registration, I wanted -- I'd like to know how the commissioner determines that an importer is qualified to register as an importer?

Through you.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you --

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Wait a minute. Let's -- for some reason my microphone wasn't working again. I'm not exactly sure why it was turned down.

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm -- see we're -- continuing to work on this.

Through you to the -- to the good lady.

Anybody who is offering for sale or transfer as defined in, I believe, we said in lines 110 through 111, would qualify as a -- as an animal importer and they would be responsible for notifying the commissioner and applying for the -- the registration.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the gentleman for his answer.

I was just seeking to know whether there were any additional qualifications that an importer would have to meet besides saying they are an importer and actually importing the animals and paying the fee. Are there -- are there any standards that need to be met, et cetera?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And it's an interesting question that I'm trying to find the answer to, but they're -- they're -- we've done so many revisions of this bill that we have to search -- search deep into the mind. So I apologize for -- for taking so long.

In line 87 through 88, to the good Representative's questions, it complies with any requirements provided by the commissioner as to the health, safety and humane treatment of the animal

that is applicable to animal importers. So it is upon those three categories: the health, safety and humane treatment that are also requirements.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So I am, through you, then do I understand correctly that this language, at the moment, still leaves the determination of those qualifications up to the commissioner, for the moment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, yes, that is the language that is in the amendment before us.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for his answer.

Another question, through you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm interested in knowing a little more about the relationship between the actual licensing and the resultant -- well, and the health of the animals that are imported. I understand that there's a -- a possibility of inspection, but I go back to one of the questions asked by one of our colleagues a little earlier.

Sometimes, through you, Mr. Speaker, sometimes animals are imported into the state who have health issues. They are not contagious or infectious, but they have some health issues. And one of the reasons that they're offered for adoption is -- is, well, very humane reasons, someone who will agree to take care of an animal who has a long-term health condition but who can't infect other animals. And I wanted to make sure that in this language, does it allow for animals who are not a 100-percent healthy, who can't full pass a health inspection, can still be offered for sale or adoption by an importer?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, as mentioned before, I believe it's 15 days prior to bringing the animal in, you have to have a certificate of health or certificate of origin with a veterinarian sign off and within 48 hours of bringing the animal into the state.

I -- I guess, from my perspective, yes. The -- the -- that could say that the animal is not healthy but could still offer it for transfer or for sale, but I'm not sure that the vet would give clearance if the animal was in very poor health or very ill, but I'd leave that determination to the -- to the vet as opposed to the floor of this Chamber.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for that answer.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That would then still allow -- my -- my question pertains to some cases that I have seen or read about of an animal that is brought in to be housed, for example, at a shelter which often gives animals up for adoption but treats the animal for major health conditions or for conditions caused by

abuse by a prior owner. My question is, would the importer be allowed to, nevertheless, bring the animal into the state and see to it that the animal be treated for those conditions?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, they would. They would if -- as -- when they're ready to bring the animal up for adoption, transfer or sale, they would still have to meet the requirements laid out in the amendment before us.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

And Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for that answer.

And another question, through you, Mr. Speaker.

There are many organizations that offer animals for adoption that are, for example, rescue organizations that pertain to particular breeds of dog, and so on, and they do their business over the Internet. If someone in Connecticut were to

identify an animal displayed on -- by one of these rescue organizations and the rescue organization was in another state, would that rescue organization be classified as an importer under this bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, if the organization is bringing an animal into the state and offering it for sale, adoption or transfer, then, yes, it would be considered an animal importer.

And if the good Representative looks to line 77, if such registrant is domiciled out of state, the name, Connecticut address and phone number of Connecticut based agent for service or process must be included. And the reason we did that is so that if you -- if you do purchase or adopt a cat or dog at one of these events and the animal is ill that there is somebody locally that you can go back to that is responsible for the health and well-being of the animal.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for the answer.

I'm just looking at those lines just so I can make sure I understood. If you'll give me one second.

Okay. So if I -- if I understand then, Mr. Speaker, the -- the actual out-of-state Internet -- not provider, but organization, would then be classified as the importer, and it has to have its in-state agent.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you.

And that -- that organization would -- would have to obtain a Connecticut license?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

As we laid out in the section, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for that clarification.

And I -- I do support the bill, and I thank those who put in the work to put it together.

Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Further on House "A"? Further discussion on House "A"?

If not, I'll try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Opposed.

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Further on the bill as amended?

Representative Chapin of the 67th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I rise in support of the bill as amended before us today. As I indicated earlier on the amendment, there have been discussions in prior years and negotiations that have taken place that have included rescue organizations, the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association and, certainly, we need to thank the Department of Agriculture for their expertise and input and bringing this altogether. And once again, I encourage all of my colleagues to support it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Chapin.

Representative Urban of the 43rd, you have the floor, madam.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I, too, rise in support of this bill. It has taken us a long time to get here on this bill, and it's going to make Connecticut a safe place to

adopt animals so that our people in Connecticut can feel that the animals that they're adopting, fostering, transferring will have their health taken care of. And I would also like to thank the Department of Agriculture, Representative Hurlburt, Our Companion Animals, Connecticut Vet Association and Representative Chapin. It really took a group of us to work together to get this done, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you.

Further on the bill as amended? Further on the bill as amended?

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And just -- I'd be remiss if I didn't echo the comments of the two previous speakers. This -- this bill has been a long time coming and had a lot of hard work and effort through a number of us, and I appreciate all the hard work, the Department, especially, for their -- for their expertise and knowledge and urge adoption from the Chamber.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Kumbaya.

Further on the bill as amended?

If not, staff and guests please retire to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast.

If all members have voted, the machine will be locked.

Would the Clerk please take a tally and would the Clerk, please, announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5368 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting 145

Necessary for passage --

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

One moment, Mr. Clerk. Do not announce the

tally please.

THE CLERK:

It's too late. Once I -- once you tell me to read, I --

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Please continue with your announcement, sir, then.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5368 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting 145

Necessary for passage 73

Those voting Yea 143

Those voting Nay 2

Those absent and not voting 6

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative McCrory, for what purpose do you rise, sir?

REP. MCCRORY (7th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to place a vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

So noted.

REP. MCCRORY (7th):

Thank you very much there young man.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you.

The bill as amended passes.

Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege?

Representative Cafero of the 142nd, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, for purposes of an announcement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Chamber, this is a special day for one of our members, Representative Chris Davis is about to depart and head to Savannah, Georgia, where he will be married this weekend so I wanted us all to wish him a big round of applause.

Mr. Speaker, let it be noted that he was trembling as he told me that.

Best of luck to you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you very much.

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL. 54
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Moving to Calendar page 11, Calendar 513, House Bill 6557; Madam President, move to place that item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

On Calendar page 12, Calendar 535, House Bill 6226; Madam President, move to place the item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Moving to Calendar page 13, Calendar 560, House Bill 5368; Madam President, move to place the item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY: .

Thank you, Madam President.

Continuing on Calendar page 13, Calendar 567, House Bill 6157; Madam President, move to place the item on the Consent Calendar.

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

Madam President, the items placed on the first Consent Calendar begin on Calendar page 10, Calendar Number 478, House Bill 6488; Calendar 480, House Bill 5256.

Calendar page 11, Calendar 513, substitute for House Bill 6557.

Calendar page 12, Calendar Number 535, substitute for House Bill 6226; Calendar 555, House Bill 6259.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 560, substitute for House Bill 5368; Calendar 567, substitute for House Bill 6157.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 574, substitute for House Bill 6410; Calendar 578, House Bill 6156.

Calendar page 15, Calendar 591, House Bill 6263; Calendar 594, substitute for House Bill 5508; Calendar 595, substitute for House Bill 62 -- 5263.

Calendar page 16, Calendar Number 606, substitute for House Bill 6581; Calendar 609, substitute for House Bill 6501.

Calendar page 17, Calendar 610, substitute for House Bill 6224; Calendar 613, substitute for House Bill 6453.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 614, substitute for House Bill 5068; Calendar 628, substitute for House Bill 5008; Calendars 633, House Bill 6489.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 635, substitute for House Bill 6351; Calendar 640, House Bills, 6559.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 642; House Bill 6595.

Calendar page 21, Calendar 645, substitute for House Bill 6267; Calendar 648, substitute for House Bill 5326; Calendar 650, substitute for House Bill 6344.

Calendar page 22, Calendar 651, substitute for House Bill 6540.

Calendar page 23, Calendar Number 655, substitute for House Bill 6497; Calendar 657, substitute for House Bill 6262; Calendar 658, House Bill 6364; Calendar 659, House Bill 5489.

Calendar page 24, Calendar 660, substitute for House Bill 6449.

Calendar page 36 -- correction -- Calendar page 33, Calendar Number 390, substitute for Senate Bill 1181.

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Calendar page 36, Calendar Number 481, House Bill
5472.

Calendar page 37, Calendar Number 584, substitute
for House Joint Resolution Number 34; Calendar 585,
substitute for House Joint Resolution Number 54;
Calendar 586, House Joint Resolution Number 65,
Calendar 587, House Joint Resolution Number 66.

Calendar page 38, Calendar 588, House Joint
Resolution Number 80; Calendar 589, House Joint
Resolution Number 63; Calendar 590, House Joint
Resolution Number 35; Calendar 620, substitute for
House Joint Resolution Number 45.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 621, substitute
for House Joint Resolution Number 47; Calendar 622,
House Joint Resolution Number 68; Calendar 623,
substitute for House Joint Resolution Number 69;
Calendar 624, substitute for House Joint Resolution
Number 73.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 625, substitute for
House Joint Resolution Number 81; Calendar 626, House
Joint Resolution Number 84.

Madam President, I believe that completes the
items placed on Consent Calendar Number 1.

THE CHAIR:

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Thank you.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, please call for a roll call vote, and the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gomes?

If all members have voted; all members have voted? The machine shall be locked.

And, Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar
Number 1.

Total number voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0

Those absent and not voting 0

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar passes.

The Senate will stand at ease for a moment.

(Chamber at ease.)

SENATOR LOONEY:

Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, Senator.

The Senate will come to order.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda Number 5 for today's session.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda Number 5, dated Wednesday, June 8, 2011.

Copies have been made available.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.