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the commitment that the Department should be making on behalf of foster parents. We are working to improve how we license foster home. The Annie E. Casey Foundation is assisting us in identifying where in the process of our current case practice we have been unsuccessful in finding relative caregivers.

They will be making specific recommendations across our entire system, which will include both practice and policy changes. In addition, representatives from Allegheny County and the State of Tennessee to national leaders in the relative care will be working with our staff to share how they implemented their major reforms.

We are also going to establish internal processes to ensure that we continue to aggressively look for relative resources after a child has entered care. We have written, we have offered written comments regarding the other bills on your agenda.

And rather than going through each of the remaining bills, I'll stop at this point to answer any questions that you may have. And, again, I look forward to working with each and every one of you towards the betterment of children and families in this state.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, thank you, Commissioner, and I'm particularly pleased to hear that Annie E. Casey is going to be working with the Department on the foster parent issue. Certainly, we are all well aware of the foundation's expertise in this area. That is, that's really great news.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: So thank you. I would just, because HB6226

it happens to be an issue that's very close to my heart, and you did report to us favorably on the cross-reporting bill on animal abuse, and, I mean, animal cruelty and child abuse.

And I would just ask you, in your former position, you certainly have encountered some of these issues and that you do feel that there is a very strong link between cruelty to animals and then carrying that cycle of violence forward to children or domestic partners.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Absolutely. As many of you know, I was a public defender in one career and then a trial judge and then a Supreme Court Justice in subsequent careers. I'm on my fourth. And I'm also an educator.

And I have to say, going back to the, really, 1978 when I first became a public defender and was engaged in the representation of serious felony offenders, I have to say that in almost every instance of serious, serious, deviant criminal behavior in gathering information on my clients going back often sometimes for purposes of mitigation explanation, etc., and just gathering history, in so many cases of, involving these particular types of individuals and offenders, there was a history of animal abuse. I have to say that.

And it started sometimes as early as age seven or eight and obviously escalated. So there, in my mind, you can call it a layperson's opinion, or you can call it the opinion of somebody who's been in the criminal justice system for over 30 years, but there's absolutely a correlation to my mind.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Commissioner. Are there other questions for Commissioner Katz? Well,

reexamining our policies and our practices vis a vis foster parents. But if, in fact, the Committee deems it essential to put it into legislation, I'd be happy to sit down and work with you directly or through our representatives regarding language.

I mean, one of the things that I think would certainly go a long way is if in providing the specific measures and practices that you would like the agency to follow, if you put it in, quite bluntly, that failure to follow these does not serve as a basis for litigation, and that would be fine.

In other words, that it's a, sort of a best practices model, that we should do everything we can to accomplish those goals, but that the failure to follow any one of them would not be grounds for litigation.

REP. BETTS: I agree with you on that. Okay, thank you.

REP. URBAN: Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS: Thank you, Madame Chair. Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Good afternoon.

REP. REBIMBAS: Specifically regard Bill 6226, I think it's just a little bit of clarification that I was interested in, specifically, I think, section two.

If there's a correlation between an animal cruelty report, does DCF only get involved if there's an open investigation at that same address, or does this provide them with the ability to look into opening an investigation if there's children at that same address?

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Let's see if I can answer you.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: I've been informed. Thank you. Apparently, it relates to whether or not we've got an open case. And if we have an open case, and it comes to our attention, that's information that we would report.

What I was asking my legal advisor about is whether or not it necessarily has to require an open case. And just sort of thinking a little bit about that, if I'm really moving towards, in the long run, embracing differential response, then I would question whether or not there even should have to be an open case for purposes of reporting.

REP. REBIMBAS: Okay. Well, I think that's certainly a concern in the sense of we're definitely going to need clarity as to, you know, what this law is going to entail so then everyone's clear in that regard, because it would be certainly different if it's an open DCF file versus reopening one that has been previously closed or completely opening a new one. I think that's, you know, some important distinctions.

One of the other things that I wanted to point out and also question is very often we get DCF here testifying in regards to lack of funding, lack of staff, etc. How is this going to be implemented administratively, and is there any type of fiscal impact in that regard? And how do you foresee the length of time that it would take to implement something like this if

it's passed?

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: I, frankly, one of the advantages of coming to an agency new is that I tend not to see a lot of the problems, and it's, to me, it's really just an issue of best practices.

So I look at something like this, and I think, I think it's, it could be ministerial. As soon as you pass it, quite frankly, it goes from you to me to our training school and training program, and it immediately becomes part of the education process. And it's virtually instantaneous.

REP. REBIMBAS: And do you foresee any type of expense or fiscal impact that this would have in implementing it?

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: No.

REP. REBIMBAS: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Do you have any other questions, Representative Rebimbas?

REP. REBIMBAS: (Inaudible).

REP. URBAN: Any other questions for the Commissioner? Well, with that --

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: We thank you for your testimony.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Thank you very much for the opportunity.

REP. URBAN: And we look forward to working with you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Ditto.

REP. URBAN: At this stage, we're going to, because we have some students here from Brien McMahon High School who do have to be back, we're going to interrupt.

And we did talk to our other agency people that were going to be testifying and asked that we can just make sure that with all the snow days and things that we're dealing with, we will be able to get Emily Todd and Lexi Brown back where they need to be.

So if the girls would come up from Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk and testify. We're happy to have you here, ladies.

EMILY TODD: Good afternoon, Representative Urban, Senator Musto, Representative Fawcett, and Members of the Committee. We have a special greeting for Representative Terrie Wood, who is from our district and who has worked with us on legislation about teen dating violence.

My name is Emily Todd, and I am a member of the Center for Youth Leadership, which is based at Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk. Joining me is Lexi Brown, who is also a member of the Center.

On behalf of the 226 student activists at the Center for Youth Leadership, we are here to testify in support of House Bill 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY and its companion bills about humane education in schools, an animal abuser registry, and counseling for children who have been convicted of animal cruelty.

Child abuse prevention has been the focus of our public awareness and social change

campaigns since 1999. The fact that the link between animal cruelty and child abuse is just the fourth subtopic added to our campaign in 11 years points to its importance.

We were compelled to adopt the link between these issues for several reasons. Number one, the overwhelming evidence that the link between animal cruelty and child abuse is real.

A correlation between animal abuse, family violence, and other forms of community violence has been established for some time. Of the scores of studies we reviewed about the link, two stood out.

Northeastern University and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals looked to animal abuse cases over a 21-year period. They found that a person who had committed animal abuse was five times more likely to commit violence against people than those who had not abused animals.

The second study assessed the exposure to violence of nearly 1,000 college students. It found that 62 percent of the students who witnessed or committed animal cruelty as a child had also experienced child abuse or domestic violence.

Number two, children and animal cruelty. According to the Humane Society of the United States, 20 to 31 percent of the intentional animal cruelty cases every year are committed by people my age. The stories and statistics are no better closer to home.

We were horrified by the countless stories we heard from classmates who use pellet guns to shoot small animals. And according to the

animal control officer in Bridgeport, of the approximately 550 animal cruelty cases his office investigates every year, half are committed by teens 13 to 16 years of age.

Number three, the importance of cross-reporting. According to studies conducted by the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, cross-reporting has helped foster early intervention in cases with children.

In several recent cases, said Professor Frank Ascione, children hinted at animal abuse to teachers who alerted animal protection agencies. Those workers spotted warning signs of other types of abuse, so child welfare workers were called in. The caseworkers found that the children themselves were being abused.

While these studies are important to our cause, nothing compares to our personal experiences. Twice a week for the past seven years, our members have volunteered at two safe houses in Fairfield County for children who have been abused.

I cannot begin to tell you how many times we have heard five-, six-, seven-year-old children talk about how their abusive parent kicks, punches, and slaps the family pet just as he kicks, punches, and slaps mommy or the number of drawings we've seen that show a child hurting an animal because it seems like fun or because I saw my daddy do it or the number of times we were playing with children to find one or two of them demonstrating some sort of violent behavior towards an imaginary animal. I saw my daddy do it, it seems like fun, drawings of children hurting other animals.

LEXI BROWN: Based on testimony last year about a similar bill and what we've been reading lately, we realize there is opposition to House Bill 6226.

We know that the Department of Children and Families expressed concern about training cost and other resources, as did the Department of Agriculture, the Connecticut Municipal Animal Control Officers Association and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association.

The Department of Children and Families also expressed concern about the families' confidentiality. Although we support House Bill 6226, we have questions about how it will be implemented. Here are some issues we'd like you to consider if you've not already done so.

Number one, will DCF caseworkers and animal control officers ask about animal cruelty and child abuse as a matter of routine, or will it be based on a casual visual observation only?

For example, will DCF caseworkers add a screen for the animal cruelty to the screens it uses to assess domestic violence, substance abuse, and other issues when investigating a case? Will the software that DCF uses have to be revised to accommodate caseworkers' notes about animal cruelty?

Number two, if a DCF caseworker notes animal cruelty during a home visit, he or she will be required to report it. Let's say the caseworker also suspects child abuse in the family. How will the caseworker report the suspected animal cruelty without compromising the family's identity?

Number three, has anyone assessed how House

Bill 6226 will affect the training and work of animal control officers and caseworkers? For example, who will design and pay for the training that animal control officers and caseworkers will need to complete?

We have one answer for you. Ask the Connecticut Humane Society to invest some of its endowment in a training course, and have its staff lead the training.

And, finally, let's say House Bill 6226 becomes law. Who will design and implement an evaluation to see how the law is working three, six, nine months after it is enacted?

Emily mentioned our work in safe houses with children who have been abused. Those personal experiences help fuel our passion for this issue, and they are an indication that the time is now to pass this legislation.

Here's another indication, this one from scores of people like you and me, people who stop at our countless street corner demonstrations to voice support for the protection of children and pets, people who want you, the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Agriculture, to work together, to demonstrate some political will, and to make this legislation a reality.

Thank you for listening. We would be happy to answer any questions.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, ladies, and, also, it's a tremendous work that you're doing down in your high school, and we are all enormously impressed. And you have come and testified at the task force, and you came and testified in October, so it's, your commitment to this is very heartening for us as we watch our young

people grow. So thank you so much.

I appreciate some of the recommendations. Some of those have been considered, and it took us a long time to get this language together and get people to agree with the direction that we wanted to take.

But you have some very good suggestions, particularly the one on Connecticut Humane Society. And I would really like to see us work together to see if we couldn't get the Connecticut Humane Society to use some of their endowment to actually help us along these lines.

So it's a wonderful job testifying, and I'll see if we have any questions from anyone on the Committee. Yes, Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: Thank you, Madame Chair, and thank you both, as always, for being here, and I'm very impressed with the amount of research you've done in the writing of this statement. And, hopefully, we'll be able to move forward with it, but thank you again for coming.

EMILY TODD: Thank you.

LEXI BROWN: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: And any other questions? Well, then I think we're going to get you back to school on times, ladies. Maybe that wasn't your idea to have happen, but --

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

REP. URBAN: And now back to our agencies, and I believe next on our list is Carolyn Signorelli with the CCBA. Carolyn, good to see you. Welcome.

My name is Jeanne Milstein. I am the child advocate for the State of Connecticut, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 6225, AN ACT REQUIRING A RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD ON OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT OF CHILDREN, Senate Bill 846, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF EDUCATIONAL CREDITS, and House Bill 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY.

I fully support House Bill 6225, which is the RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD. Too often, the children who are placed out of state are gone and forgotten, out of sight and out of mind. As of December of 2010, Connecticut had 367 children placed outside the state in residential mental health treatment facilities.

The housing, treatment, education, and visitation of those 367 children reportedly cost Connecticut $35 million last year, yet we have no outcome data to tell us whether these children are significantly better off being in these out-of-state treatment programs.

A results-based accountability report card would provide a tool to assess the overall benefits of placing children outside of Connecticut relative to its costs. The cost of out-of-state placement to children and communities cannot be overstated.

Sending children to live out of state effectively severs their engagement with their families, their schools, and their communities. It interferes with plans for timely discharge and transition back to the child's home and community.

the school district shall communicate with the child's parent or guardian or educational surrogate and with the local education agency who will have responsibility for the child upon discharge.

This bill can provide further quality assurance by requiring timeframes that the receiving school district will provide written notice of enrollment to DCF, that DCF shall transfer the child's educational records to the new school district, and that the new school district shall credit the student for all work received while enrolled in Unified School District Two.

The bill can provide additional support to important efforts to ensure educational stability for children in the care of DCF and our state-operated facilities.

I also fully support House Bill Number 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY. Frequently, as we've learned today and through prior years, animal abuse is part of a continuum of abuse within families.

Often, animal abuse represents a way to coerce, intimidate, and further control child victims and force them into silence and fear. Studies of homes in which children are abused have found a significant rate of instances of abuse of animals in the home as well.

Cross-reporting among DCF employees and animal control officers would heighten awareness among child welfare and animal control professionals of this strong correlation and likely improve outcomes for both children and animals.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

SENATOR MUSTO: Okay. Thank you. Our next speaker is Lisa Taylor-Austin. Good afternoon.

LISA TAYLOR-AUSTIN: Good afternoon. Distinguished Legislators, my name is Lisa Taylor-Austin. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in Milford, Connecticut. I'm also a National Certified Counselor and a Board Certified Forensic Mental Health Evaluator.

I fully support H.B. Number 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING. Often people who abuse their family members also abuse the family pet as a way to control family members from speaking out and getting help.

A man in Hartford stabbed his girlfriend's dog, threatening to kill the pet if his girlfriend did not make him a sandwich. In Meriden, a puppy was thrown from a second story porch during a drunken rage.

The perpetrator has two prior cases of domestic abuse charges against him. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders states the first criterion of the Conduct Disorder diagnosis is aggression to people and animals.

Often, youth with conduct disorder are later diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder know to the general public as sociopath. Sociopaths often abuse animals and family members.

Seventy-five percent of inmates who committed violent crimes also reported abusing animals. The research is clear that there are strong connections between animal abuse, child abuse, and domestic abuse.

Almost half of women seeking shelter due to domestic abuse have delayed leaving because of the family pet. Up to 71 percent of victims entering domestic violence shelters report that their abusers threatened, injured, or killed the family pet.

Research indicates that pet abuse may be a red flag for increased severity of domestic violence and more controlling behavior by the abuser. It's time to be proactive. Abusing or neglecting a pet, although wrong and possibly criminal in its own right, can be a symptom that something much more is happening within a home.

Pets are often abused as a means of psychological torture and intimidation to tell the family members, you will be next. Abusers also intimidate children into not disclosing sexual abuse by threatening to kill their pets.

House Bill 6226 is an essential tool for obtaining services for families who are suffering from domestic violence, child abuse, and animal cruelty. It's imperative that these families receive the help that they are unable to ask for themselves.

By cross-reporting to DCF, services can be put into place for these families. Cross-reporting ensures the safety for our families and pets from abuse and possibly death.

Legislators, please support House Bill 6226. Our children and pets do not have a voice. Let us be their voice now. Thank you.

REP. URBAN: All right. Thank you very much for your testimony and also for the statistics

that you notated. It's very useful for us to have those and your prior experience with it.

So I would just ask if there are any Members of the Committee who have any questions. We really appreciate your being here. Thank you.

LISA TAYLOR-AUSTIN: Thank you, Representative Urban and all of you.

REP. URBAN: And the last person I believe on our list to testify is Cheryl Martone. Welcome.

CHERYL MARTONE: Good afternoon, Distinguished Members of Select Committee on Children. I know that you're all aware who I am, and the new Members, good afternoon as well. I'm Cheryl Martone from Westbrook, Connecticut.

And two years ago, for the ones that don't know, I started the U.S. Concerned Parents Support Group, because my child was kidnapped by DCF two years ago, and I could say that out and out rightly, because at the trial, the malicious trial that was brought up against me, I was not afforded to present my witnesses and evidence. Therefore, my child was kidnapped by DCF.

And recently, I had a, and I started a website as well pertaining to some of the laws and some of the things that I'm working on as an activist because of what was done to my child and I, and, because I was a very good parent, and they tried to make me look like I was an unfit parent when I was not, because I took my child out of a horrible situation at a school at Westbrook Middle School where a principal was harassing and badgering my child.

HB6227

So I'm here to talk about most of these bills, because, and particularly 6227, AN ACT

much.

We need to have a bill about false reporting by DCF workers. We need to start straightening out and stabilizing the Department of Children and Families, because it's very, I see that it's very, very unstable and investigating.

That's what I do. I'm investigating what DCF does, and I've found so many inconsistencies, so many irrefutable, it's unbelievable what they, I can't, I'm like in shock the more I get into this, and there's too many, too much monetary incentives going on by way of foster parent.

Nothing against foster parents, but there's too much foster parent, I discovered on the irs.gov that there's major foster parent, I don't know if you know about that. There's major foster parent incentives.

Too much monetary incentives going on, and this Bill 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND THE ANIMAL CRUELTY, well, you can't always, you can't go by how a child treats an animal.

That's nonsensical, because an animal is an animal is an animal. And if the animal attacks a child, or if a child's allergic to an animal, you can't like, you know, say that's any kind of behavior. You can't justify that behavior.

SENATOR MUSTO: Ms. Martone, could you wrap up your comments, please?

CHERYL MARTONE: Okay. What I'm saying is I kind of have to write a written report for you on Bill 6227, because there's a lot of

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Public Hearing Testimony of
Commissioner Joette Katz

Select Committee on Children
February 3, 2011

S B. No. 844 - AN ACT ADOPTING A FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS

The Department of Children and Families appreciates the intent behind S.B. No. 844 - An Act Adopting a Foster Parent Bill of Rights, but has some concerns regarding the language of the bill as written.

While we support the spirit behind this legislation, but do have concerns that enacting this language in state law can subject the state to litigation in which plaintiffs assert that the state is legally responsible to provide the services that support the specific provisions of this legislation.

S B. No. 845 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO NOTIFY NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS OF CERTAIN ABUSE AND NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS

The Department of Children and Families is generally supportive of S.B. No. 845 - An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Notify Noncustodial Parents of Certain Abuse and Neglect Investigations.

While the language on lines 19- 24 provides important safeguards to protect persons from risk of physical harm, given the legislature's focus on domestic violence issues, there may be a need to further refine this language and the Department will be happy to participate in further discussions with the proponents of this legislation.

S. B. No. 846 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF EDUCATIONAL CREDITS

The Department of Children and Families **supports** S. B. No. 846 - An Act Concerning the Transfer of Educational Credits. This proposal is part of DCF's legislative package this year and we thank the Committee for raising the bill.

This bill builds upon Public Act 09-82 - An Act Concerning the Readmission of Students, by extending the same provisions regarding the transfer of education credit that currently exists for Unified School District # 1 (Department of Correction) to Unified School District # 2 (Department of Children and Families). Unified School District # 2 provides educational services in the three DCF-operated facilities: Riverview Hospital; Connecticut Children's Place; and the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and we want to ensure that the children and youth who transition from our care receive the appropriate education credit when they transfer to other school districts.

HB 6225
HB 6226
HB 6227

We suggest a minor amendment on line 7 to change "enrolls" to "registers" for the purpose of consistency with the current statute.

H. B. No. 6225 - AN ACT REQUIRING A RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD ON OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT OF CHILDREN

The Department of Children and Families **supports** H. B. No. 6225 - An Act Requiring a Results-Based Accountability Report Card on Out-of-State Residential Treatment of Children.

DCF is committed to implementing RBA principles throughout Department operations and has no objection to preparing a report card concerning out-of-state residential treatment by February 1, 2012. Currently, DCF has over 350 children placed in out-of-state facilities at an annual cost of approximately $37.6 million for out-of-state behavioral health residential treatment centers and approximately $4.8 million for out-of-state juvenile justice residential treatment centers.

The Department is committed be reducing the number of children placed out-of-state and believes that the report card will be of assistance in this endeavor.

H. B. No. 6226 - AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS-REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY

The Department of Children and Families **supports** H. B. No. 6226 - An Act Concerning Cross-Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty.

The American Humane Association has published a considerable amount of information documenting the correlation between animal abuse, family violence and other forms of community violence. As some of you may be aware, the American Humane Association is, in addition to its advocacy regarding the protection of animals, a national leader in the child welfare arena. In fact, DCF has worked with American Humane on our differential response initiative.

We do endorse adding animal control officers as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect under section 17a-101 of the General Statutes. DCF provides training free of charge to mandated reporters to provide them with a better understanding of the child abuse and neglect reporting process in Connecticut. The program contains information on:

- Connecticut law addressing child abuse and neglect;
- Definitions;
- Key indicators to look for in recognizing cases of suspected child abuse and neglect;
- Legal issues and concerns about mandatory reporting;
- Procedures for making a report of abuse or neglect; and
- An explanation of what happens when a report is made.

The Department provides over 300 training sessions annually with approximately 8,000 to 10,000 participants.

TESTIMONY OF JEANNE MILSTEIN, CHILD ADVOCATE
BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
FEBRUARY 3, 2011

Good afternoon, Representative Urban, and members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 6225, An Act Requiring A Results-Based Accountability Report Card On Out-Of-State Residential Treatment Of Children, Senate Bill No. 846, An Act Concerning The Transfer Of Educational Credits, and House Bill No. 6226, An Act Concerning Cross-Reporting Of Child Abuse And Animal Cruelty.

I fully support House Bill No. 6225, An Act Requiring A Results-Based Accountability Report Card On Out-Of-State Residential Treatment Of Children. As of December of 2010, Connecticut had 367 children placed outside the state in residential mental health treatment facilities. The housing, treatment, education, and visitation of those 367 children reportedly cost Connecticut 35 million dollars last year, yet we have no outcome data to tell us whether those children are significantly better off for being in these out-of-state treatment programs.

A Results-Based Accountability report card would provide a tool to assess the overall benefits of placing children outside of Connecticut relative to its costs.

The cost of out-of-state placement to children and communities cannot be overstated. Sending children to live out of state effectively severs their engagement with their families, schools, and communities. It interferes with plans for timely discharge and transition back to the child's home and community. Even when families are involved and are provided with visits, family obligations such as other children, job schedules, transportation availability, etc. frequently require that visits occur at times when qualified clinical staff are not available to facilitate therapeutic contact.

Children who are sent out of state for treatment are in effect given the implicit message that they are too sick, too "bad," or too disabled for their families or for the wealthiest state in the country to be able to care for them. To illustrate how clearly children hear this message, I will share with you a brief story of an OCA staff member who visited a child who was placed in Virginia several years ago. After the Assistant Child Advocate introduced herself, the child asked her, "are you going to be my mommy?"

It is of utmost importance that Connecticut's communities care for their children. Bill No. 6225 will allow us to undertake an assessment of which children are being sent out of state, and what their needs are. It is crucial that we also assess any capacity Connecticut's providers might have to care for these children closer to their homes.

A meaningful RBA report card would describe not only the children being served and their needs, but also the efficacy of the treatment received in out-of-state facilities. The extent to which treatment goals are met, the demonstrated improvements in behavior and functioning, the ability to assimilate upon discharge into their homes and schools, and

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many other factors must be evaluated longitudinally in order to describe the success and cost-effectiveness of the treatment services Connecticut purchases.

We urge the state to spend DCF money more productively through specialized services that wrap around the child and the family and are based on individual need. To treat our children most effectively, Connecticut must strengthen community-based services using evidence-based practices, and serve children proactively before their needs become severe. This will help divert many children from costly inpatient hospitalization or residential placement.

When residential or hospital-level treatment is necessary, Connecticut must have the capacity to meet that need. An RBA assessment of the children Connecticut is currently not serving within our border is an important first step to developing our capacity to treating our most vulnerable children in their communities.

I fully support Senate Bill No. 846, An Act Concerning the Transfer of Educational Credits. This bill would help to ensure that all children who are admitted to one of DCF's institutions or facilities, and whose needs require that their education be provided within that facility by the Unified School District II, will have their educational credits transferred expeditiously when they are enrolled in a new school district. DCF policy already requires that prior to discharge from Unified School District II, the School District shall communicate with the child's parent or guardian or educational surrogate and with the Local Education Agency who will have responsibility for the child upon discharge. This bill can provide further quality assurance by requiring timeframes that the receiving School District will provide written notice of enrollment to DCF, that DCF shall transfer the child's educational records to the new school district, and that the new School District shall credit the student for all work received while enrolled in Unified School District II. The bill can provide additional support to important efforts to ensure educational stability for children in the care of DCF and our state-operated facilities.

I fully support House Bill No. 5041, An Act Concerning Cross-Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty. Frequently, animal abuse is part of a continuum of abuse within families. Often, animal abuse represents a way to coerce, intimidate, and further control child victims and force them into silence and fear. Studies of homes in which children are abused have found a significant rate of instances of abuse of animals in the home as well. [1] Cross-reporting among DCF employees and animal control officers would heighten awareness among child welfare and animal control professionals of this strong correlation and likely improve outcomes for both children and animals. This bill supports the critical need for prevention and early intervention related to child maltreatment and childhood behavioral and mental health issues. HB6226

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions.

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[1] People and Animals, Kindness and Cruelty: Research Directions and Policy Implications. Frank R. Ascione and Kenneth Shapiro, Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 65, No. 3, 569-587 (2009).

Testimony of Susan B. Linker
CEO, Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary
Vice President, CT Votes for Animals

In Support of Raised Bill 6226 – an Act Concerning Cross Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty
Select Committee on Children
February 3, 2011

Representative Urban, Representative Fawcett, members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

On behalf of CT Votes for Animals, Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary and the statewide coalition of animal welfare organizations with the Animal Welfare Federation of CT, we strongly support Raised Bill 6226.

This crucial legislation is long overdue and is essential for the welfare of our state's children and animals. In fact, it makes so much sense that many people are shocked when they learn that cross-reporting of child abuse and animal abuse is not already mandated.

Researchers have found that a batterer's first target is often an animal living in the home, the second—a spouse or child. Often, batterers are able to control their victims, such as a spouse, by threatening, torturing, and/or killing the victim's animals.

This bill will give officials investigating child abuse a critical heads up about violence in the home.

In a national study of more than 1,600 animal abuse cases in the U.S. (Lockwood & Ascione 1998):

- 21% of cases of intentional animal cruelty also involved some sort of family violence.
- 13% involved domestic violence, and in these cases, the perpetrator often forced victims, including children, to witness the animal cruelty.
- 71% of pet-owning women entering a shelter reported their partner had threatened, hurt or killed an animal, and 32% reported their children had hurt or killed animals.

A guidebook published by The Latham Foundation entitled, "Breaking the Cycles of Violence: A Guide to Multidisciplinary Interventions" reports that children who become accustomed to animal abuse or neglect and experience it as part of their "norm" have:

- Killed pets to rehearse their own suicide
- Killed animals before an abusive adult can do so
- Tortured or killed animals as a gang initiation rite or to gain status among their peers, or
- Transferred abuse directed at themselves upon pets.

Please support Raised Bill 6226 to assure that our animal control officers and child welfare agencies are better prepared to more quickly and effectively intervene in instances of family violence, abuse and neglect. This bill would greatly protect the most vulnerable members of our community- children and animals.

Testimony of Annie Chittenden
CT SafePet Project, Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary
In Support of Raised Bill 6226 – an Act Concerning Cross Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty
Select Committee on Children
February 3, 2011

Representative Urban, Representative Fawcett and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

I am the program manager of the CT Safe Pet Project, which is a program of Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary. We provide vetting and foster services for the pets of victims of domestic violence, and helpline and referral services for pet owners in crisis.

We strongly support Raised Bill 6226. This bill requires that animal control officers who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child is being abused or neglected, or is in danger of being abused or neglected, to immediately report this activity to the Department of Children and Families.

Animal abuse is often discovered earlier than domestic abuse because it so often occurs in plain view. Since laws governing animal abuse and child abuse investigation and intervention differ, animal control agents can often enter homes when social service workers cannot. Working together through cross-reporting, these agencies can help one another gain information about possible neglect and abuse.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police has reported: "Social scientists and law enforcement agencies have begun to examine cruelty to animals as a serious human problem closely linked to domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse and other violent crimes. [These efforts] cannot undo generations of abuse, but they can be an effective means of breaking the cycle of family violence from one generation to the next."

The reporting of animal abuse and neglect can provide a crucial red flag indicating that conditions in the home pose significant risk to children and others.

Because 70 to 80% of households with children also have pets, I provided training last year to DCF caseworkers regarding the critical link between animal welfare and child safety. A DCF caseworker subsequently called us in on a case involving an at-risk child whom DCF had removed from the home. Thanks to her training, the caseworker was not only able to recognize that a child was at risk, but that family's pets were sick and malnourished and one pet was close to death. We accepted the pets into our program and worked with DCF and the pet owner over the course of several weeks so that the family was ultimately able to be reunited, and the adult involved was better educated about both her child's and her pets' needs.

Proper training on the benefits of cross-reporting can result in early detection of abuse and neglect, and can ultimately protect children and animals from escalating cycles of abuse.

Please support Raised Bill 6226. This bill will go a long way toward protecting victims of abuse and neglect who have no voice and are ultimately the most vulnerable members of our communities- our children and domestic animals.
Thank you.

Pg 7 line 16

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Public Hearing Statement to the Connecticut General Assembly

February 3, 2011

In Favor of:

HB No. 6226 An Act Concerning Cross - Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty

Legislators:

My name is Lisa Taylor-Austin. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in Milford, CT. I am also a National Certified Counselor and a Board Certified Forensic Mental Health Evaluator. I fully support HB No. 6226

People who abuse animals rarely stop there.[i] "Jeffrey Dhamer, one of the most well-known serial killers impaled frogs, cats and dogs heads on sticks[ii] Caroll Edward Cole, executed for five murders, said his first act of violence, as a child, was to strangle a puppy

Often people who abuse their family members also abuse the family pet, as a way to control family members from speaking out and getting help. A man in Stratford, CT was convicted of several crimes when he strangled the family pet rabbit, struck his wife very hard with an object, all in front of his three young children. [iii] A man in Hartford, CT stabbed his girlfriend's dog, threatening to kill the pet, if his girlfriend did not make him a sandwich.[iv] In Meriden, CT a puppy was thrown from a second story porch during a drunken rage. The perpetrator has two prior cases of domestic abuse charges against him.[v]

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) states the first criterion of the Conduct Disorder diagnosis is **Aggression to People and Animals** (DSM-IV-TR page 98).[vi] Often youth with Conduct Disorder are later diagnosed with **Antisocial Personality Disorder**, known to the general public as "sociopath." This personality disorder is characterized as a pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others and includes a lack of remorse and failure to conform to societal norms (DSM-IV-TR page 706). [vii]

The research is clear that that there are strong connections between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic abuse. Almost half, of women seeking shelter due to domestic abuse have delayed leaving because of the family pet.[viii] Up to 71% of victims entering domestic violence shelters report that their abusers threatened, injured, or killed the family pet. Research indicates that pet abuse may be a red flag for increased severity of domestic violence and more controlling behavior by the abuser [ix]

Seventy-five percent of inmates charged with violent crimes also have a history of cruelty to animals.[x]

It is time to be proactive. Abusing or neglecting a pet, although wrong and possibly criminal in its own right, can be a symptom that something much more is happening within a home. Pets are often abused as a means of psychological torture and intimidation to tell the family members, "You will be next." Abusers also intimidate children into not disclosing sexual abuse by threatening to kill their pets.

House Bill No. 6226 ***An Act Concerning Cross - Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty*** is an essential tool for obtaining services for families who are suffering from domestic violence, child abuse and animal cruelty. It is imperative that these families receive the help they are unable to ask for themselves. By cross reporting to DCF, services can be put into place for these families. Cross-reporting ensures the safety of our families and pets from abuse and possibly death.

Legislators, please support HB 6226. Our families, children and pets do not have a voice. Let us be their voice now.

Thank you.

---

[i] (Daniel Goleman, "Experts See Parallels Between Dhamer, Previous Serial Killers," The New York Times Service, August 11, 1991).

[ii] Andrea Vance,"10-Year Old Luke Kicked a Lamb to Death Like a Football," News of the World (UK), January 23, 1998.

[iii] http //www pet-abuse com/cases/10370/CT/US

[iv] http //www pet-abuse com/cases/14497/CT/US

[v] http //www pet-abuse com/cases/5628/CT/US

[vi] http //www aafp org/afp/2001/0415/p1579 html

[vii] http //pn psychiatryonline org/content/39/1/25 2 full

[viii] Brigid Schulte, "Sheltering Women and Their Pets, Too," Washington Post, November 8, 2007.

[ix] www ahimsahouse org/about-us/what-we-do

[x] Chapter One: The link between Animal and Human Abuse, http //family vio csw fsu edu/rural/animal-ch1-4 html

page 1 Line 17/18

Center for Youth Leadership

Why wait for someone else to make a difference?

Connecticut Assembly's Select Committee on Children
Testimony in Support of HB 6226

February 3, 2011

Introduction

Good afternoon Representative Urban, Senator Musto, Representative Fawcett and members of the committee. We have a special greeting for Representative Terrie Wood, who is from our district, and who has worked with us on legislation about teen dating violence.

My name is Emily Todd and I am a member of the Center for Youth Leadership, which is based at Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk. Joining me is Lexi Brown, who is also a member of the Center.

On behalf of the 226 student activists at the Center for Youth Leadership, we are here to testify in support of HB 6226 - *An Act Concerning Cross-Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty* - and its companion bills about humane education in schools, an animal abuser registry and counseling for children who have been convicted of animal cruelty.

HB 6226: Act Concerning Cross-Reporting of Child Abuse & Animal Cruelty

Child abuse prevention has been the focus of our public awareness and social change campaigns since 1999. The fact that the link between animal cruelty and child abuse is just the fourth subtopic added to our campaign in 11 years points to its importance.

We were compelled to adopt the link between these issues for several reasons:

1. *The overwhelming evidence that the link between animal cruelty and child abuse is real* A correlation between animal abuse, family violence and other forms of community violence has been established for some time. Of the scores of studies we reviewed about the link, two stood out. Northeastern University and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals looked at animal abuse cases over a 21-year period. They found that a person who had committed animal abuse was five times more likely to commit violence against people than those who had not abused animals. The second study assessed the exposure to violence of nearly 1,000 college students. It found that 62 percent of the students who witnessed or committed animal cruelty as a child had also experienced child abuse or domestic violence.

2. *Children and animal cruelty* According to the Humane Society of the United States, 20 to 31 percent of the intentional animal cruelty cases every year are committed by people my age. The stories and

statistics are no better closer to home. We were horrified by the countless stories we heard from classmates who use pellet guns to shoot small animals. And according to the animal control officer in Bridgeport, of the approximately 550 animal cruelty cases his office investigates every year, half are committed by teens 13-16 years of age.

3. *The importance of cross-reporting* According to studies conducted by the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, cross reporting has helped foster early intervention in cases with children. "In several recent cases," said Professor Frank Ascione, "children hinted at animal abuse to teachers who alerted animal protection agencies. Those workers spotted warning signs of other types of abuse, so child welfare workers were called in. The caseworkers found that the children themselves were being abused."

While these studies are important to our cause, nothing compares to our personal experiences. Twice a week for the past seven years our members have volunteered at two safe houses in Fairfield County for children who have been abused. We cannot begin to tell you how many times we have heard 5-6-7 year-old children talk about how their abusive parent kicks, punches, and slaps the family pet just as he kicks, punches, and slaps mommy; or the number of drawings we've seen that show a child hurting an animal because "...it seems like fun" or because "...I saw my daddy do it;" or the number of times we are playing with the children to find one or two of them demonstrating some sort of violent behavior towards an imaginary animal.

Based on testimony last year about a similar bill and what we've been reading lately, we realize there is opposition to HB 6226. We know that the Department of Children and Families expressed concern about training cost and other resources, as did the Department of Agriculture, the Connecticut Municipal Animal Control Officers Association and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. The Department of Children and Families also expressed concern about families' confidentiality.

Although we support HB 6226, we have questions about how it will be implemented. Here are the issues we'd like you to consider, if you have not already done so.

1. Will DCF caseworkers and animal control officers ask about animal cruelty and child abuse as a matter of routine, or will it be based on a casual visual observation only. For example, will DCF caseworkers add a screen for animal cruelty to the screens it uses to assess domestic violence, substance abuse and other issues when investigating a case? Will the software that DCF uses have to be revised to accommodate caseworkers' notes about animal cruelty?

2. According to the bill, if a DCF caseworker notes animal cruelty during a home visit, he/she will need to report it. Let's say the caseworker also suspects child abuse in the family. How will the caseworker report the suspected animal cruelty without compromising the family's identity?

3. Has anyone assessed how HB 6226 will affect the training and work of animal control officers and caseworkers? For example, who will design and pay for the training that animal control officers and caseworkers will need to complete? We have one answer for you. Ask the Connecticut Humane Society to invest some of its endowment in a training course, and have its staff lead the training.

And finally, let's say HB 6226 becomes law. Who will design and implement an evaluation to see how the law is working three-six-nine months after it is enacted?

Emily mentioned our work in safe houses with children who have been abused. Those personal experiences help fuel our passion for this issue, and they are an indication that the time is now to pass this

legislation. Here's another indication, this one from scores of people like you and me, people who stop at our countless street corner demonstrations to voice support for the protection of children and pets; people who want you, the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Agriculture to work together; to demonstrate some political will; and to pass this legislation.

Thanks for listening. We would be happy to answer any questions.

~ ~ ~

Center for Youth Leadership at Brien McMahon High School
300 Highland Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut 06854
203.852.9488 and www.gocyl.org

February 3, 2011

JOINT
STANDING
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HEARINGS

SELECT
COMMITTEE
ON CHILDREN
PART 2
308 - 621

2011

line 22, Page 3

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Public Hearing Testimony

Select Committee on Children

February 8, 2011

Proposed S.B. No. 198 AN ACT CONCERNING RIVERVIEW HOSPITAL

The Department of Children and Families suggests that the Select Committee on Children take **no action** on Proposed S.B. No. 198 An Act Concerning Riverview Hospital.

Report Due April 15th

Section 32 of Public Act 10-3 requires the Department in consultation with the Child Advocate, to submit a plan by April 15, 2011 regarding the future of Riverview Hospital to this committee and also the Human Services and Appropriations Committees. We believe that this plan will provide data and other information that will guide the General Assembly and the administration in making a sound policy decision on the future of Riverview.

Background

Riverview Hospital is the only publically operated psychiatric teaching hospital for children and adolescents in the State of Connecticut. The 88 bed facility provides inpatient psychiatric assessment and treatment for those ages 5 to 18 years of age. Riverview has the clinical expertise to provide mental health treatment services for children and adolescents who are experiencing extreme emotional and behavioral difficulties. Riverview Hospital functions as a Safety Net for the State by providing inpatient care to a mostly disfranchised and indigent population. Riverview Hospital serves an important role as the most intensive psychiatric treatment setting within the behavioral health continuum of care developed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Behavioral Health Partnership (BHP). Riverview Hospital Admission Criteria as set by BHP is much higher than other private hospitals in Connecticut and require failed past treatments including unsuccessful inpatient hospitalizations. Riverview takes patients from private facilities with more complex histories and who can't be managed successfully in those settings leading to inpatient stabilization at Riverview. The expertise in the treatment of seriously emotionally disturbed children and adolescents has been developed slowly over the course of many years of staff experience at Riverview, and represents a specific set of clinical skills and knowledge which cannot be automatically transferable to other community hospitals.

Riverview Hospital offers inpatient services on eight units. Treatment provided at Riverview Hospital is trauma informed, culturally sensitive, person and family centered and embraces a holistic team approach providing comprehensive, state of the art care to children and youth of Connecticut. Interdisciplinary teams at Riverview Hospital consist of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Clinical Social Workers, Nurses, Milieu Staff, Rehabilitation Therapists, Educational & Teaching Staff, Speech and Language Specialists, Occupational Therapist, Pediatrician, Dentist, and trainees from various disciplines providing round the clock treatment. Riverview Hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission (formerly JCAHO) which is a national organization providing accreditation to hospitals nationwide based on best practice standards of clinical care.

SB746 SB890
SB135 HB5120
HB5503 HB5814
HB6226

The Department does provide postsecondary educational support for foster youth in the DCF care and for children who were adopted from our foster care system after January 1, 2005. In addition, we continue our subsidized guardianship beyond age 18 (up to age 21) for youth in postsecondary programs.

While these proposals are well-intentioned, there will be a considerable fiscal impact associated with both of these bills which we cannot support in the current fiscal climate.

H.B. No. 5503 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRIORITY OF GRANDPARENTS IN CHILD CUSTODY CASES

The Department of Children and Families **opposes** H.B. No. 5503, An Act Concerning the Priority of Grandparents in Child Custody Cases.

The Department is concerned about prioritizing grandparents over other potential relative caregivers of a child which may, in some cases not be in the best interest of the child. Commissioner Katz has made the placement of children with relatives a top priority for the Department and would appreciate the opportunity to make the structural changes necessary to significantly increase the number and percentage of children placed with relatives.

Public Act 09-185 already requires the Department to look for suitable caretaker relatives in the early stages of cases where children have been, or are, at risk of being removed from their homes due to allegations of abuse or neglect. It also establishes court procedures for making placement decisions when a relative seeks custody and creates a rebuttable presumption that placing a child with a relative is in the child's best interests.

H.B. No. 5814 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN AND CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

The Department of Children and Families **supports** H.B. No. 5814, An Act Concerning Children and Cruelty to Animals.

As with our testimony last week in support of H. B. No. 6226, An Act Concerning Cross-Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty, we recognize the correlation between animal abuse, family violence and other forms of community violence. The Department believes that that it makes sense to require a youth charged with animal cruelty to undergo psychiatric or psychological counseling or participate in an animal cruelty prevention and education program.

Tomorrow Tuesday February 8th, a hearing is schedule in the Select Committee on Children on Raised Bill 890. This is a ***prospective bill*** which is diametrically opposed to bill SB 65 which is a full access bill. This bill does not restore the Human Right to all adult adoptees born in Connecticut to obtain a noncertified copy of their original birth certificates, a right that was taken away in 1974.

Wednesday February 9th at the statehouse, Elizabeth Samuel's, Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law will be giving her presentation Adoption, Identity, and Confidentiality: The History of Closed Records. This presentation will clearly show how unjust Raised Bill 890 would be if it were to pass and how SB 65 sponsored by Senator Edward Myer is model legislation that has passed in Maine and New Hampshire, legislation that the Connecticut Legislature should endorse. .

As a birthmother, I realize the need for adult adoptees to have the same civil rights as non adoptees and the right to their identity.
Please support SB 65 by Senator Edward Myer.

Thanks,

Linda Woods
504-443-1012

Dear Elizabeth Giannaros,

The Select Committee on Children on Raised Bill 890 a ***prospective bill*** is **diametrically opposed** to the bill **I support,** SB 65 which is a full access bill. Bill 890 does not restore the Human Right to all adult adoptees born in Connecticut to obtain a non-certified copy of their original birth certificates, a right that was taken away in 1974. On Wednesday February 9th at the statehouse, Elizabeth Samuel's, Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law will be giving her presentation Adoption, Identity, and Confidentiality: The History of Closed Records. This presentation will clearly show how unjust Raised Bill 890 would be if it were to pass and how SB 65 sponsored by Senator Edward Myer is model legislation that has passed in Maine and New Hampshire, legislation that the Connecticut Legislature should endorse. .
Thank you for your time and consideration of SB 65.

Donnie Davis

Donnie Davis, President
American Adoption Congress
www.AmericanAdoptionCongress.org

February 7, 2011
419 Fern St
West Hartford, CT 06107
(Until 2010, I lived in Fairfield County for 30 years, in Greenwich, Stamford, Stratford, Shelton.)

Re: Raised Bill 890 - An Act Providing Certain Adult Adopted Persons with Access to Parental Health Information and Information in their Original Birth Certificates

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a member of ACCESS CONNECTICUT, a grass-roots group of birthparents. adoptees, adoptive parents and professionals associated with adoption, who believe that Connecticut adoptees have been denied the right that all other Connecticut Residents have – the right to obtain non-certified copies of their original, unamended birth certificates from the Vital Records Office. It is their history, their origin and we believe they have the human right to that information.

I have three requests:

First: I am writing to ask you to NOT support Raised Bill 890. This bill extends the inhumanity for adoptees of not being allowed access to their original birth certificates. Specifically Raised Bill 890 states that any adoptee who is adopted on or after Oct 1, 2012, will have a right to a non-certified copy of his/her original birth certificate when he/she reaches 21 years of age. This translates to no adoptees having access to their rightful information until 2033. This will continue the inhumanity for tens of thousands of adoptees in the meantime. PLEASE STOP RAISED BILL 890 !

Second: I am asking for your support of Bill 65. Why? Because this bill ends the inhumanity for adoptees retrospectively, back to 1974 when copies of the original birth certificates became sealed in CT. Prior to 1974 certified copies of their original birth certificates were available to adoptees. PLEASE SUPPORT SB 65!

Third: On Wednesday February 9, Elizabeth Samuels, Professor, University of Baltimore will be giving her presentation: Adoption, Identity and Confidentiality: The History of Closed Records. This presentation will clearly show how unjust Raised Bill 890 is.

On the other hand, Bill SB 65 sponsored by Senator Edward Meyer is model legislation that has passed in and Maine and New Hampshire, legislation that The Connecticut Legislature should endorse.

I thank you, in advance, for your attention and action regarding these matters.

Sincerely,

H – 1102

CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS
2011

VOL.54
PART 11
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The House of Representatives if voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber, please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the Members voted? Have all the Members voted? If so, the machine will be locked. And Mr. Clerk, if you'd kindly announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 851 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number voting	140
Necessary for adoption	71
Those voting Yea	140
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	11

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill is passed in concurrence.

Mr. Clerk, will you kindly call calendar 251.

THE CLERK:

On page 43, calendar 251 substitute for House Bill number 6226, AN ACT CONCERNING CROSS REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY. Favorable report of the committee on human services.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Question is on acceptance and passage. Will you explain the bill please, Ma'am.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. This bill gives another tool in our efforts to combat child abuse as it expedites the exchange of information between the Department of Children and Families and Department of Agriculture. The link between animal cruelty and child abuse or future violent behavior has been well documented since first recognized by the FBI in 1971.

And a short trip on the internet will give you many egregious examples of cases. I was just called on one in my part of the state where a small dog had been treated for a lacerated liver along with many other injuries which cause the ACO to petition the courts to remove the dog from the owners. When a reporter called me about the case she informed me that when she asked for the police report on the animal cruelty charge she was asked which report was she looking for, the animal cruelty report or two reports

of domestic violence.

I think the most compelling testimony that we got in the children's committee was from the Center for Youth Leadership at the Brian McMahon High School. And that is also the -- the place where the ranking member of the children's committee is the representative. These 226 students adopted the link between child abuse and animal cruelty as a focus of their public awareness and social change campaign since 1991.

And I would just read from their testimony briefly to point out that when they went to Fairfield County safe houses where they worked with children that were being abused they couldn't tell you how many times they heard from five, six and seven year old children talk about how their abusive parents kicks, punches and slaps the family pet just as he kicks, punch -- punches, and slaps mommy.

A history of animal cruelty is found in 50 percent of people entering domestic shelters and who were afraid to enter because they thought their pet would be hurt by the remaining spouse. And 71 percent who entered shelters reported that abusers had threatened, injured, or killed the family pet. This

bill has been worked out between the Department of Children and Families and Department of Agriculture.

And I'm very pleased to say that Commissioner Katz is a firm supporter of the bill as well as Commissioner Rusiski from the Department of Agriculture. The trigger is an incident of animal abuse that is bad enough to remove the animal. This requires a verified petition from the court and is public record.

The ACO them makes a report to Department of Agriculture and Department of Agriculture compiles those reports and sends them to DCF. DCF then checks for an open case and if there's a match the open case becomes a part of the record for the DCF case. In addition, DCF reporters are directed to make an oral report to the Department of Agriculture on any suspected animal abuse that they may encounter while working on a child protection case.

It also directs DCF when the available appropriations to develop a training program on the link between child abuse and animal cruelty, and it also makes an available an existing DCF program that trains agencies and other groups in the identification of child abuse and neglect to animal control officers.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO number 6183. I ask that he call it and I be allowed to summarize.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO number 6183 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A". Mr. Clerk, please call the amendment.

THE CLERK:

LCO number 6183, House "A" offered by Representative Urban.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The gentlewoman has asked leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this amendment after consultation with Department of Children and Families we had initially had the report of the DCF worker being anonymous. This amendment strikes the word anonymous. We also said in lines 46 to 48 there was a proviso if this interfered with the child protection case that the DCF worker did not have to make report. But in vast discussions we could not come up with an incident when that would happen so we

struck that section too. I move adoption.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question is on adoption. Will you remark? Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment before us. We had discussed this at quite some length before the human services committee, the use of the word anonymous and I think the amendment, deleting that as well as the additional lines is an improvement to bill and I encourage my colleagues to support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (87th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question through you to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed.

REP. BETTS (78th):

Yes, I think this is an excellent amendment. I certainly support it. I know it applies to employees

of DCF. Does it apply to any other state employees that may witness a form of animal cruelty? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban, do you care to respond?

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you -- through you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker. This bill is specific to Department of Children and Families and Department Agriculture and the municipal ACOs. However I would hope that if other state workers were witnesses to animal abuse or child abuse that there would be a report that would be made.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Representative Betts because he was the one who brought this to our attention in the children's committee. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78th):

Thank you. And thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to get that on the record for legislative intent. And I certainly do support it and ask other members to join us in supporting it. Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor signify by saying, Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Opposed, Nay.

The Ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Remark further on the bill as amended.

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, a question to the proponent if I may.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The -- through you, the reports that the animal control officer or -- may or may not make or get funneled to the Department of Agriculture. Are those going to be public documents? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely. The -- once they petition the court it becomes a public record. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, I guess really it sort of more a comment than a question. The problem -- I voted against this in committee not because I don't think the cause or the -- the idea is laudable but I'm concerned that municipal animal control officers really don't have a level of training -- or don't need a level of training or expertise that another police officer for instance would need. And in fact section 22-331 which is referenced in the bill itself highlights this that an animal control officer could be frankly just about anybody. So with that, through you, Mr. Speaker. If an animal control officer files a report pursuant to this bill with -- I don't know, what's the right word -- without due -- without due foundation is there any remedy or any

ability for the person listed on that report to have their name expunged or otherwise correct that record? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you -- through you, Mr. Speaker. In discussion with the Department of Ag, when it gets to the point of a file petition with the court it's -- it's very few because the severity of the abuse is such that it doesn't happen very often. So my -- my response would be we would not expect it to go forward from there as it would just become a part of the record if it was an open case of child abuse on DCF.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to understand your answer. I mean, I understand that if -- if the Department of Agriculture gets a name and then they cross reference it with DCF and there's a match, you know, then the -- the machine starts rolling or there's -- you know, there's an ability to address that issue.

My concern more is just having the report from the animal control officer in general. You know, whomever is appointed by -- by the local township to take control -- you know, do animal control. If -- if that person puts a name on a list and sends it in pursuant to this bill and that -- and that placement of a name in the list was either done improvidently or in bad faith is there a method or a mechanism that that -- their name -- the person's name who was listed can be expunged? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I think we do have to have some faith in our animal control officers that they have been out there and they know what they're looking for. But to go backwards in the process there is not anything in this bill that would take you backwards in the process. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the Representative for her answers. That's my -- my

concern with the bill. It's the concern I expressed in the committee and it's the reason I unfortunately have to vote no now because the animal control officer while we can have faith in them doing things like tracking down stray dogs and taking care of the raccoon in the garage should -- should not be charged with flagging a person whose name is going get -- potentially get flagged with, you know, the tinge of potential child abuse if it's done improperly.

There's a -- there's a method and there's a training regimen that police officers have, that DCF personnel have, that certain, you know, other workers have that I don't think is in the animal control officers skill set. And so I'm concerned that we're going to get people put on a list and have their reputation impugned unnecessarily and without recourse. So for that I -- and for only that reason I can't support the bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir.

The distinguished Deputy Speaker from Hartford, Representative Kirkley-Bey.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY (5th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I'd like to

thank Representative Urban in being so persistent in bringing this bill back year after year because I believe she's hit on something that we have missed and that there's a great correlation between the number of children who abuse animals and go on to become abusers of people.

And I think if you live next door to a child and you happen to see this you can call the parents and let them know that the child is misbehaving. You don't have to wait for some dog warden. You should be able to tell by your own self if an animal is being abused. I mean we -- we're here we know the difference so we should be able to just do it. And I mean you have to make a big to do about it. But I just want to say thank you my dear and I hope everyone will come out and support the amendment -- the bill as amended. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Madam. Gentlewoman from Fairfield, Representative Kupchick. Representative.

REP. KUPCHICK (132nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Gentlelady.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Gentlewoman.

REP. KUPCHICK (132nd):

I rise in support of the bill. I -- I would also like to thank Representative Urban for bringing out the bill. I think there is a -- there is a lot of evidence already that shows that there is a direct correlation between individuals who abuse animals and then go on to abuse children or adults.

I'm not concerned about the issue being brought up about false reporting. It's pretty clear. You know, it's not somebody who left their dog outside. This is somebody who is abusing an animal that it's very clear. I don't think you need any special training to know if an animal is -- has a -- it's leg broken. If it's -- I mean, we read the stories. We know what abuse is. And I -- and I think that this is an important bill and I hope that my colleagues will support it. And I thank Representative Urban for her persistence. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Ma'am.

Gentleman from Newtown, Representative Lyddy.

REP. LYDDY (106th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in strong support of this legislation. And watching

year after year the discussion that we've been having regarding this proposal is disheartening at the least because we have to be much better about connecting the dots between child welfare and animal welfare in the State of Connecticut.

You know when all is said and done violence fuels violence and we have to do a better job at stifling it when and where we can. You know we all have the responsibility and perhaps the great opportunity to recognize and address when we see signs of abuse whether it be of children or animals. And you know the see something say something needs to be applied here. And so whether you're a child welfare worker or a police officer, a teacher, a legislator or a private citizen who sees signs of abuse, we owe it to that child and to that family to say something.

And so I think connecting these dots is very important and I'd like to thank Representative Urban for her leadership on this proposal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir.

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make -- answer one of the questions that was asked earlier on about the training of the animal control officers. And if you look at the OLR bill analysis, DCF does provide training to these folks so they will be well trained to be able to recognize and identify -- identify problems. They will have some educational training. But through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed, sir.

REP. BETTS (78th):

Thank you very much. Madam Chair, what happens in the case where a -- an individual is taken to Superior Court for alleged animal cruelty abuse and subsequently is found later on to be innocent and that information -- the arrest is put into their file. Do you know if that could be taken out of that individuals file or how that will be removed or if it is removed given that they were found innocent? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. With discussions with Department of Children and Family and Department of Ag, we would certainly not continue to have that in the file but I would point out that once the petition is filed with the court it is public record so it's out in the public to begin with. But yes, that was discussed and at the -- the commissioners would be looking for that and not continuing to have that in the file. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78th):

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I also wanted to just get that for legislative --

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

It's Mr. Speaker.

REP. BETTS (78th):

I said Madam Chair, through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Oh, okay.

REP. BETTS (78th):

I know my eyes are bad but not that bad. Anyway, I thank you very much for that answer and I just wanted to get that on the record for legislative

intent. I strongly support this bill for reasons that have been identified earlier on. Congratulate the committee and the chairs for doing this and the commissioner. And I think it's something that's going to make a very big difference in helping to prevent abuse later on. So I will strongly be supporting this. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

I got the thought.. Thank you, sir. The distinguished dean of the House of Representatives, Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support the bill and to thank Representative Urban for her hard work on this bill. It's been kicking around for many years and I hope this is the year it finally achieves passage. There's more and more statistical evidence that there is a correlation in violence in the home among animals and children and spouses.

In October 2005, for example, there was a -- a paper published in the Journal of Community Health. A team of researchers conducted a study over seven years in 11 different metropolitan areas and they determined that pet abuse was one of the five factors that

predicted who would initiate other abusive behaviors. There was a strong correlation. Basically all of these things animal abuse, spouse abuse, child abuse, they are all power and control crimes that have similar roots and unchecked they have a corrosive effect on the children and the families.

So this is a tool -- a new tool for determining which homes have this problem and breaking the cycle of violence. I hope we will all rally behind this bill and pass it today.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Ma'am.

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker to the proponent of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

I do realize and understand that by and large a person guilty to animals -- cruel to animals is probably going to be extending that unfortunately to children as well. Well aware of that. That's what statistics have shown. But my concern through -- to

you is in the event or in the unlikely likelihood but possibility that the person is innocent and as you just now said that it is public record but at what does it become public record?

Right at the time when that -- you know when the -- when the animal officer makes a citation or whatever he does or is it only at a latter point in time when the person is found guilty of what he or she has done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. When they file the petition with the court in order to remove the animal. If -- when the abuse is such that they want to remove the animal from the home they have to file that petition with the court. At that point it is public record. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. So it -- so that -- the petition is filed as soon as -- you know, when the petition is filed to the court it becomes public

knowledge. And as you said that if when it is found to be false hopefully does happen rare it may be I do agree. Will that also be appropriately information circulated so that person's good name which has been tarnished is no longer tarnished which is very important in the small societies that we all live in. Because it has happened to us in our town to some individual you know not related to this matter, related to something else. And so I'm always conscience of that of tarnishing somebody's good name with good intent. I fully support -- plan to support this bill. I think it is a great bill but my only concern is for the innocent whose name has been tarnished unfortunately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. Representative Williams.

REP. WILLIAMS (68th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon. A question or two through you to the proponent of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed.

REP. WILLIAMS (68th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to

Representative Urban. I guess having not been overly familiar with the reasons for this bill initially I -- I have some experience with a case in Watertown that came internationally famous many years ago, the case of Max the dog. And -- and so I guess just asking a few questions to help vet this as it relates to processes like happened to Max.

I'm wondering why is it that we are reporting this to the Department of Agriculture and not to local police, you know, authorities. I understand that oftentimes animal control officers are employees of the police department but it seems to me that what we're asking them to do is report to a state agency rather than a local law enforcement agency.
And while I'm not asking them to report to themselves I'm wondering if having a local law enforcement record first rather than going to the Department of Agriculture might make sense. Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Oftentimes in some of our bigger cities the ACO is a police officer. So that would be taking care of itself in the bigger

cities. However animal cruelty laws are under the Department of Agriculture. They have cognizance for those laws and for enforcement of those laws. So that was the obvious choice when we went forward with this. And it does involve the municipal ACO. The municipal ACO is the one that will file the petition with the court and then will report to the state ACO officer on the -- on the animal cruelty issue. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Williams.

REP. WILLIAMS (68th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you. So the local law enforcement agency -- the local police department does not get involved in animal cruelty issues. It's typically the Department of Agriculture. Is that correct? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it's correct. And for instance in my own -- in my own town we have resident state troopers. We don't have our own police department but we do have our own ACO. So because of

these multitude of ways that we have our 169 towns that do their own thing it made a lot more sense not only because Department of Agriculture is the one that's responsible but because it's the obvious one to go to. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Williams.

REP. WILLIAMS (68th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the gentlelady for her answers.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. The gentleman from the 122nd, Representative Miller.

REP. MILLER (122nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed.

REP. WILLIAMS (122nd):

Under DCF employees their required to give a report anonymously, orally, so I just wonder if that could lead to problems when they give their report orally and maybe they screw up in plain English and put -- say the wrong things and somebody gets in

trouble for no reason at all. How do we protect against -- if they're going to transcribe somebody's statements onto a written report, how do we guarantee there's no mistakes made? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The amendment removes the anonymously. And it also removed where it allowed DCF reporters not to make a report if it interfered with their duties as a child protection. But there is a significant protocol that is laid out in the bill for that DCF report to go to the Department of Ag. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miller.

REP. MILLER (122nd):

Thank the lady for her answers and I stand corrected here with some help from behind me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Hetherington.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a -- a fine bill

and I'm glad to support it but I would like to ask a question or two to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed, sir.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

When the information reaches the Department of Children and Families and then it's made available to investigators for that agency what do we anticipate the DCF person to do upon receiving this report? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. We are not mandating what happens there. We are leaving it to the commissioner and her case workers to decide whether they want to go back to that home and make another home visit. But at the very least to the good Representative it will start to open eyes to be looking for more instances of the home environment and whether the home environment is indicating that there might be more underlying violence going on that does not become immediately obvious when you're trying to chat with the child who -- or the family who does not

want to reveal that there are unfortunate things going on in the home. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Hetherington.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

Thank you. I thank the gentlelady for her answer which actually I think is a very good answer. What I wanted to explore was that we can't expect the DCF to undertake definitive action based upon the report because in fact it's still -- while I believe there's a high correlation between animal cruelty and domestic violence we cannot add that to a -- an accumulation of cause. But I think it does try to act further against the persons in the home -- the family. But I think it does certainly call for another look, a second look at a home that is already under investigations. So I think that the gentlelady's response was probably the right one and I'm glad to hear that. I do believe that this bill gets at a genuine connection and I applaud the bill and I hope -- I look forward to supporting it. Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. If I could, through you just a few questions to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed, sir.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. As I read this just to clarify we are making animal control officers mandatory reporters in these instances. Is that correct?

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Animal control officers as the reporters of the animal abuse.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

My question is as to the -- as to child abuse.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The animal control officers are only required to make the report on the animal abuse. It is the DCF to DCF. Then it's the DCF worker who will be looking for animal abuse in the homes that there might be an open case. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Okay. I think I understand that. And we are making training regarding child abuse available to animal control officers if appropriations are available. Is that correct?

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. There is an ongoing program that DCF has where they have trained between eight and 10,000 people upon request. They have 200 trainers. And if our animal control officers we are hoping -- we put the available appropriations in I would say to the good Representative just in case there were more than DCF could handle. But they do have that program. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the bill. I just -- I'm worried that we could be putting animal control officers in a situation whereby we're encouraging them to report what they perceive to be a

risk of child abuse and I understand that. But doing it in such a way that they have not received the appropriate training, thus perhaps increasing the risk for false reporting.

Let me ask -- let me phrase that in the form of a question. Are we putting animal control officers in a situation whereby we're encouraging them to report suspected child abuse but have not given them proper training in order to make that educated judgment.

Through you, sir.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Actually we -- we worked with animal control as well as the Department of Ag and the Department of Children and Families and that is why we don't have them as child abuse reporters. We have them as the animal abuse reporters and then that would then indicate that possibly in an open case there's a bigger problem in that family that we need to -- that we need to look at.

But we're offering the training looking to the future and if we can possibly make, you know, take this to its logical conclusion at some point where you

have true cross reporting on both instances. But at this point in time through you, Mr. Speaker, no, they are not reporters of child abuse.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That answers my questions and I thank Representative Urban for her time.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may, through you, a few questions to the proponent.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you. Here's the concern I have with the bill. I'm just running a scenario through my mind just reading the bill and a animal control officers out taking a drive perhaps in a response to another call, sees a -- a injured dog lying in the front yard of a -- of a home, goes up to the dog and determines that the dog has been physically abused, notes the

address of the homeowner -- property owner and then makes a report based on that observance that the animal appeared to be abused.

It was lying in front of 22 Main Street. And come to find out that the dog is actually the owner of the property two doors down, had been physically abused by that owner but nonetheless was on a different property who was -- probably went there because it was properly treated by the neighbor down the street.

But nonetheless the neighbor down the street has now been reported as potentially an abuser of a dog. And how does this bill address that scenario if I may, through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I would remind the good Representative that this only happens when there is a petition filed with the court. It's not a casual driving by and seeing that an animal is being abused. They have to take it to filing a petition with the court. But in -- in response to your question in the bill it does say the name and

address of every person the officer reasonably suspects to be responsible.

So if that dog is in front of someone else's house or in front of the owner's house and has been abused by someone two doors down and the animal control officer reasonably suspects that then you can go forward with that. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. And through you. Then there in lie my fears because if the animal control officer reasonably suspects that it could be the owner of the home where the dog is lying or two doors down on either side. How does -- how does one determine whether the animal is being abused by owner A, B, C, or D and then actually files a report based on that. I mean other than seeing the abuse in person how does one make that determination? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure whether

you've worked with animal control officers but I do a lot in my town. And the animal control officer has the ability to interview people, to ask people what they have seen, to gather evidence as to how the animal was abused. So we would be relying on the animal control officer to do what is in fact their job when they are trying to mitigate the impacts of animal abuse. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Then -- so the reasonable suspicion based on your experience as I take it, because I'm not familiar with the animal control officers and what -- and what their jurisdiction is. There would -- the reasonable suspicion then would be based on interviews and you would hope of contacting people. But is there any requirement that this actually take place, through this bill? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. If you look at

the -- under the duties of an animal control officer and I -- our state animal control officer was going to be here today when we brought the bill out unfortunately couldn't be. But he has assured me over and over again that that is well within the line of the duty of an animal control officer. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you. That is -- that is a little bit more comforting to know because you see what I'm trying to get to here is your -- the last thing we want to do and I'm certainly not opposed to the concept here that's being proposed but the last thing we want to do is put a name of somebody on a -- on a list that's correlated with abuse to animals and also child abuse.

So I mean that's a very significant stigma once that's attached to you. And we just want to make sure that if that's the case then obviously we -- they're prosecuted and defined and if it's not the case it concerns me in this bill that -- that, you know, you could just happen to get onto the list because of a suspicion. And then this is just a technical

question.

If I may through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking at lines 49. It talks about a 48 hour reporting period. I'm just thinking of a scenario again. It's a Friday afternoon late and there's a -- an observance of an abuse and there's not enough time to file the report within 48 hours. Is there any leeway that's allowed in this bill? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. This was discussed with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Children and Families and they said they would use reasonable perspective if they ran into that kind of a situation. It would not be a problem as far as they were concerned. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you. And again, that's -- that would be the concern because you'd hate to have a situation where there was abuse and there was correlation to child abuse and somehow they're now prohibited from

using that evidence because it violates the 48 hour rule here that's set forth in the statute. So I just want to make sure I guess for legislative intent that's not a mandatory 48 hour reporting period. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I might be able to set your mind at ease if you look at the line six where I talk about the court petition. Remember it's a verified petition with the court once -- that sets this bill in motion and that's going to take a period of time for the animal control officer to get that together.

So it would be very unlikely that it would happen on a Friday night at 11 o'clock or something along those lines. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108th):

Thank you again. And I understand that and I saw the petition. But just reading line 49 it says the report made pursuant to the subsection A shall be made

as soon as possible but not later than 48 hours after the employee had time to inspect. So, again, I'm just -- I'm not trying to create an issue. I just want to make sure that we don't have a problem later on. So I thank the Representative for her answers and for you, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. The gentleman from Litchfield, Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I might a few questions to the proponent of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I read through the bill a couple of times and I want to be sure that I'm reading it right. As I understand it the claim would have to be made through a local or regional -- regional animal control officer. Is that correct? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. It -- the -- it usually begins with a local animal control officer and then goes into the state at that point once the verified court petition is filed. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that's -- that's my reading that the actual beginning of the process begins at the local level and it doesn't begin at the state level. Is that correct? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

And -- and if I could through you is there -- is it anticipated that there would be an agricultural exemption to this policy? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. An agricultural exemption so I'm thinking of slaughter of animals. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

I'm not going to take that personally, Mr. Speaker. Where I -- the point I'm trying to make is that -- that I think we all understand at least try to recognize cruelty to domestic animals. We've taken great steps here in the State of Connecticut to say that it's not appropriate to leave your dog outside during extreme cold.

It's not appropriate to leave your dog outside chained up for periods of time and so on. But I think those of us that are familiar with the agricultural community know that you can leave livestock out to graze naturally and that that's -- that's not cruelty. And what I try to -- want to try to make sure here is that somehow, some way somebody picks up the phone and calls an ACO and says farmer Johnson's left his beef cows out in the field now for a month and a half. I think that's cruelty. And then, you know, some local

animal control officers or worse yet, some Department of Agriculture employee decides that it may not be a good idea. So through you, that's kind of what I'm getting at.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And now I understand where the good Representative's coming from and I certainly have been in the midst of some of those issues where a horse is left out in the snow or cows are out grazing. And this would be a verified court petition. So the level of cruelty is such that you -- it would not just be an animal left in the -- out in the snow. It would have to be something that would -- would satisfy that verified court petition. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the gentlelady for her answers.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. Remark further on the bill as

amended. For the second time, Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the second time for you. A few more -- two more questions for the proponent if I may.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Proceed.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, the -- the report -- reports that we're dealing with here. If the ACO files a report with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture then creates a list and files that report with DCF, would that paper trail be available through a freedom of information act request to your knowledge? Through you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

And with respect to the -- the last section of

the bill that one of my colleagues mentioned the training. I think it's section four. Am I correct that that training is not mandatory on animal control officers? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That's correct.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

And through you, Mr. Speaker. If such local animal control officer was to partake or directed to partake in any type of training is there -- are there funds available from the state to create that training scenario or is that -- that expense come out of municipality? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. DCF has a training academy. It's called the DCF Training Academy where they actually do this. They've trained eight to 10,000 people in the last year. They have 200

trainers. And with our new commissioner she is trying to move to a web based interactive training which other states have been starting to -- to do. So there is in fact no cost to the municipality. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that answer although I -- more by way of comment I know that the -- again the distinction between an animal control officers requirements and skill set and a DCF officer, which again I've already voiced that concern. Last comment, the verified petition I note for the Chamber for those of you who don't practice law, a verified petition is simply a list of paragraphs and you swear that the above paragraphs are true to the best of your knowledge.

And this -- this bill, Mr. Speaker, triggers the new list requirement only upon filing of a verified petition. No finding of the Superior Court. No finding by the Superior Court that there is in fact animal cruelty. Here if the -- if the animal control officer believes and files a verified petition, they

got to put that guy's name on the list even if later on the Superior Court which apparently is up here in Hartford for these matters, finds there was no animal cruelty.

Again, great goal but the mechanics are fraught with -- with all kinds of peril in getting people's reputation and character impugned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, sir. Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may, a question or two to the proponent of the bill that's before us.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

As I was listening to Representative Miner's line of questioning it just had me a little concerned about a particular situation that sometimes happens in our more rural areas and I just wanted to see if we could sort of flush out the details a bit. As I understand this legislation would be applicable to family pet situations. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That is the intent of the bill. Yes.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So a situation that often happens when we have dairy farms or farmers of any type is sometimes animals are dropped off and we do have a situation involving, you know, feral animals, feral cats in particular. Those would not be perceived to fall under this legislation should it be presumed to pass. Is that not correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. That's correct.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the proponent for her answers.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Remark further on the bill as amended. Will you remark further on the bill as amended. If not, staff and guests please come 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.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the Members voted? Have all the Members voted? If so, the machine will be locked. And Mr. Clerk, if you'd kindly announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6226 as amended by House "A".

Total Number voting	139
Necessary for adoption	70
Those voting Yea	127
Those voting Nay	12
Those absent and not voting	12

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill as amended is passed. Are there any introductions? Representative Flexer.

REP. FLEXER (44th):

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SENATE

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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.

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:

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.