

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

**PA 14-205**

SB309

House	6732-6736	5
Senate	2130-2138, 2156-2157	11
Environment	815, 927-929, 1034-1036, <u>1099-1102</u>	11
		<b>27</b>

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2014**

**VOL.57  
PART 20  
6540 – 6911**

Calendar. Is there any objection?

Hearing none, so ordered.

Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move we have Calendar 468 on the  
Consent Calendar, sir.

SB493

I further move House Calendar 535 to the Consent  
Calendar.

SB114

I'd like to move Calendar Number 537 as amended  
by Senate "A" to the Consent Calendar.

SB417

I'd like to move Calendar Number 498 to the  
Consent Calendar.

SB269

Item 499, as amended by Senate "A" to the Consent  
Calendar.

SB309

Calendar Number 508, House Bill 5312, as amended  
by Senate "A" and Senate "B" to the Consent Calendar.

Those would be the bills in their entirety, Mr.  
Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

And -- and Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to --  
no. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to remove Calendar Number

SB55

506 from the Consent Calendar, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

506 is removed from the Consent Calendar.

Representative Aresimowicz.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to remove Calendar 508 from the Consent Calendar, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Calendar 508 is removed from the Consent Calendar.

SB72

Mr. Clerk, would you kindly call the Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

Mr. Speaker, Consent Calendar Number 1, consisting of Calendar Numbers 548; 512, as amended by Senate "A"; 450, as amended by Senate "C"; 236, as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 425; Calendar 518, as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 452; Calendar 511; Calendar 5 -- excuse me -- 458; Calendar 491; Calendar 467; Calendar 468; item under suspension, 535; Senate Bill 00114, as considered under suspension; Senate Bill 417, suspension; Calendar Number 537, as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 498; Calendar 499, as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 508; and, House Bill -- what

SB176  
SB179  
SB70  
SB247  
SB271  
SB426  
SB154  
SB155  
SB262  
SB456  
SB463  
SB493  
SB114  
SB417  
SB269  
SB309  
HB5312

is it? Is off -- excuse me -- and House Bill 5312,  
which was done under suspension with Senate "A" and  
"B."

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Just -- just for my own clarification, was --  
that was 326 not 236?

THE CLERK:

Three-two-six.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir.

Representative Aresimowicz, what's your pleasure  
on today's Consent Calendar?

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move passage of the bills on  
today's Consent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Question is on passage of the bills on the  
Consent Calendar.

Staff and guests please come to the well of the  
House. Members take their seat. The machine will be  
open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll, by --  
on today's first Consent Calendar. Will members  
please report to the Chamber immediately.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the members voted?

Ladies and gentlemen, before I call for the  
machine being locked, I need to note that the board is  
not completely in line with the motion. Calendar 520  
"A," which unfortunately is up on the board, was --  
there was no motion to put that on the Consent  
Calendar. Unless there's objection, we'll just fix it  
ministerially and proceed on. Is there any objection  
to that solution?

Thank you all.

If all the -- if everyone has voted, the machine  
will be locked. Clerk will take a tally.

And the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number 1.

Total Number Voting	148
Necessary for Passage	75
Those voting Yea	148
Those voting Nay	0

Those absent and not voting 3

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The Consent Calendar as moved, the bills on it  
are passed.

And now, Mr. Clerk, we will do Calendar 528.

THE CLERK:

House Calendar 528, Favorable Report of the joint  
standing Committee on Insurance and Real Estate,  
Senate Bill 480, AN ACT CONCERNING LIFE INSURANCE  
PROCEDURE LICENSES AND REGISTRATIONS OF BROKER-  
DEALERS, AGENTS, INVESTMENT ADVISERS AND INVESTMENT  
ADVISER AGENTS.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished Chairman of the Insurance and  
Real Estate Committee, Representative Megna.

REP. MEGNA (97th):

Thank -- thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint  
committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill,  
in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on passage and concurrence.  
Would you explain the bill, please, Representative --

REP. MEGNA (97th):

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

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Seeing no objection, so ordered, Ma'am.

Madam Clerk.

Oops, sorry. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk re-calls, the next item, Calendar page 36, Calendar 199, Senate Bill 309.

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Page 36, Calendar Number 199, substitute for Senate Bill number 309, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF CONFISCATED ANIMALS AND ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS IN MUNICIPAL SHELTERS. Joint Favorable report by the Committee on Environment and Planning and Development.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer, Meyer, would you like to speak? I hope this speech is longer than the -- shorter than the title, sir.

SENATOR MEYER:

It's going to be short. It's going to be short.

Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of this good bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance of passage.

Senator, please proceed.

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SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of an LCO amendment which is a strike all amendment. It's LCO 4833.

Could he please call it and I be given permission to summarize?

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk?

THE CLERK:

Senate Amendment Schedule "A," LCO 4833, offered by  
Senator Meyer, et al.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer?

SENATOR MEYER:

I move the amendment and ask leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on adoption.

Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR MEYER:

Colleagues, if you, if you have this, this amendment in front of you, you'll notice that there are a lot of us on board on this across both sides of the aisle and that's because we're doing something in the strike all amendment to help our towns. It turns out that, that when an animal is abused or neglected it's often confiscated by our towns and they run up a big cost. And, so, what this bill is doing is it is allowing the towns to be paid up to \$25,000 from two of our State

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funds that are well funded. One is what's called the animal abuse cost recovery account and each town can get paid up to \$25,000 from that account for the cost of caring for a confiscated animal. And the other account is the animal population control account and that account is an even bigger account in which our towns would be allowed to be paid up to \$50,000 from that account. The bill also creates a task force to look at the humane treatment of animals in municipal and regional shelters and give a report back to us next year in that regard.

So, that is the entire bill. It's good for our towns and I urge its support.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President..

Madam President, I also stand in support of the bill before us. These were two issues that began in two separate committees and merged here tonight, once again, through the product of good compromise. And I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President.

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I, too, rise in favor of this amendment and I want to thank Senator Meyer, Senator Chapin, Representative Miner and others who have worked on this bill. As Senator Meyer stated, situation like this took place in one of the towns that I represent. Many of you may have heard or seen it in the news and different articles, but typically when a situation where there was abuse and neglect, the instance that took place in Bethlehem was well over 60 dogs and \$500, I think, certainly would never cover the expenses that the town of Bethlehem had in maintaining and taking care of the dogs, the kennels, the veterinary costs, and so on.

So, I want to thank Senator Meyer very much for, for helping us with this bill. This will prevent the occurrences that took place in Bethlehem from going forward hopefully and ensure that if it does then the cost would be helped with for these communities because it does seem to add up.

So, again, I want to thank Senator Meyer and Senator Chapin for this amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. I hope the microphones aren't turned up too loud because I'd hate to have the budget broom come in and sweep these accounts.

That's my question as to if the amount of money that's available at the towns, I think it's a great thing. I think the bill is great, but I'm just curious, how is the funds -- how are they obtained in the funds -- in the account in the first place? Is it through, I don't know, registration or, or how do the funds get the money that make them available to the towns or is it straight appropriation through the State budget?

Through you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President.

I'm not sure I know the answer to that. Maybe Senator Chapin, it looks like he does and I would yield to him, if I might.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin, will you accept the yield, sir?

SENATOR CHAPIN:

(Inaudible).

THE CHAIR:

Doesn't look like it. Okay.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President. Yes, I do.

For the animal welfare account, it's my understanding that there are really limited revenue sources that go into that account. I think probably the most frequent one is if somebody is before a judge with some sort of animal abuse charge, sometimes they resolve it by writing a check to this particular account. The Animal Population Control Fund is funded both -- I don't know the dollar amount, but when you license a dog, I think some of that money goes in there. And I think if you adopt a dog, I think some of that money goes in there. So, that, that's usually the account that's -- has more going in as well as more going out.

I think in the years I've been here, there may have been one year where we did actually take some money to solve some deficit problem, but generally it does have a small surplus and that's one reason why we felt that it would be appropriate to reimburse some

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municipalities in the -- in cases like the one that Senator Kane experienced.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President.

Unfortunately, sometimes we're a product of our own demise. And I think when the word gets out to some of the municipalities that may not be aware of these two accounts, we may get more requests than the balance currently is in those accounts. And is there a backup that anybody is aware of that will make the towns whole if they make the request if the funds aren't there or it's only once the funds run out, that's it until they're replenished at a later time?

Through you, Madam President, to -- I'll ask Senator Chapin that question, if I may.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President. Again, through you.

Both sections of this bill for both of those accounts, they're capped. The animal welfare account is capped at \$25,000 a year and the animal population control account is capped at \$50,000 a year. The Commissioner under the bill before us would have the discretion as to which account, provided he doesn't exceed that cap for either account. And in the event that it was a, a year where many municipalities found themselves in this situation and applied for those funds, if there weren't enough I assume what would happen is those towns may either be reimbursed, first come first served, or somehow have some proration take place.

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Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President.

That clarifies it a little bit for me. So, we have two accounts. One account is capped at 25 and the other account is capped at 50,000. And, so, all the towns, the most that they could apply for is the cap of that amount. You may have just one town that goes up to the 25,000 or one town that goes up to the 50,000, depending on what the source is, but you could have multiple towns making the request and it's capped and then we'll deal with that in the future if that problem ever arises, which it doesn't sound like it's ever been an issue. Is that correct?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President.

In my discussions with the Department of Ag, I, I think the Bethlehem case has been kind of the, the extreme case. I don't think it's reasonable to think that anyone would expect a similar case with the number of animals that were seized. I think it was 63 animals in that case.

The other protection we've put in to safeguard the dollars in those accounts, under -- I'm assuming what was an old existing law, a judge can order a \$500 bond in a case like this. We've also changed that to say \$500 per animal. So, that, again, provides huge safeguards to help protect those funds from having huge demands apply to them.

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Again, the Animal Population Control Fund, that gets used for spay and neuter vouchers. I know that the Department of Ag issues an annual report from that fund. Some years there is a bit of a surplus. The animal welfare account is primarily -- today it's used for the Department's second chance facility -- facility down in Niantic where they may seize a horse and they work with the Department of Corrections to help take care of the animals down there and take care of the facility. So, that's primarily what that account is used for as well.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank Senator Chapin, Senator Meyer for the answers. I do support the bill. I have a couple animals myself. I'm glad that part of my fees go to be able to fund this. So, the towns that want to save these animals and rescue these animals from the abuse and harm, they can go on and hopefully get adopted by, by somebody that's -- loves their pets more than those that didn't in the first place. So, I stand in support of the bill.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. If there is no objection made --

THE CHAIR:

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Senator, we have to vote on the amendment first.

SENATOR MEYER:

I'm sorry, (inaudible).

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

If not, I try your minds. Everyone in favor of Senate "A" please say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed.

Senate "A" passes.

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

And now, if there's no objection, may this go on our  
Consent Calendar, please?

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

(Inaudible). Madam President, if the Clerk would call as the next item Calendar page 2, Calendar 159, Senate Bill 269.

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk.

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this. And there are many people to attest to this story because their lives have been turned around and they are healthy and intact. So, kudos to the leadership on the Insurance Committee and to all of the colleagues in the Circle who also got this and have supported it over the years.

Thank you, very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

Not Senator Crisco? Do you want to --

SENATOR CRISCO:

Yes. If there is no objection, I'd like to place that on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk would now proceed to read the items on the Consent Calendar so that we might then proceed to a vote on the Consent Calendar?

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Call of the Consent Calendar Number 1 page 2.  
Calendar Number 159, Senate Bill 269. Page 31,  
Calendar Number 51, Senate Bill 43. And Calendar 43,  
Senate Bill 10. Page 33, Calendar Number 132, Senate  
Bill 178. Page 36, Calendar Number 199, Senate Bill

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309. Page 39, Calendar Number 6, 268, Senate Bill  
410.

THE CHAIR:

Madam Clerk, will you now call for the roll call vote on the Consent Calendar? And the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

There will be an immediate roll call vote in the Senate for the Consent Calendar Number 1. Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate. All Senators report to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate for the Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call vote in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

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

Madam Clerk, will you please call the tally?

THE CLERK:

All those voting on consent Calendar 1.

Total Number Voting	35
Necessary for Adoption	18
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar has passed.

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT  
PART 2  
593 – 1065**

**2014**

REP. GENTILE: Karen, could you please put your microphone on?

KAREN LASKI: Oh, sorry. My name is Karen Laski. I'm on the Board of Connecticut Votes for Animals. Thank you for this hearing.

HBS417

I would like to support House Bill 5422, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AWARENESS OF HEARTWORM DISEASE ON THE DOG LICENSE FORM. I think -- I know when I get something from -- a notice from the town clerk's office, I am -- I'm very serious about it and I think this little box that would say do you use heartworm preventative for your dog would encourage people to use it. I think it's just a great bill.

And I also support Senate Bill 309, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL CARE COSTS FOR CONFISCATED ANIMALS. I was very surprised to hear that the town of Bethlehem, Connecticut, had incurred so much cost for the cruelty case that's been going on for a month now because it's being appealed by the so-called owner of these dogs and over \$32,000.

And I think towns should be spared -- towns should be spared. Towns are cleaning up the mess for these cruelty cases and I think the person who perpetrates the cruelty should be more responsible. And I think that will make people think maybe twice about it if there's a monetary punishment for the cruelty.

I also support Senate Bill 316, the labeling of food products that are packaged in the materials containing BPA. I think it's a consumer's right to know. I understand about the public health aspect, but I'm also convinced that BPA is very dangerous from what I've read and listening. And I also think it would encourage companies to not use it.

We feel that S.B. 27 could be strengthened in the following ways. There should be a clear plan to replace the incinerator with recycling, waste reduction, and composting, and not another incinerator.

Recycling has not advanced on CRRRA's watch. We need to be part of any decision regarding new uses. We support the goal of 60 percent recycling by 2024, but strongly urge you to consider a higher goal of 80 percent by 2030. We urge you to use clear language on product stewardship requiring manufacturers to take responsibility for the recycling of the products and other waste reduction policies.

We urge public participation in the solid waste management plan and in choosing for -- for repurposing. Many of the toxins released by trash incineration disproportionately affect the poor and the elderly in the communities of color and the problems that affect these communities.

Thank you very much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Maggie. Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE: Oh, boy. Thank you, Representative Gentile and members of the Environment Committee.

First, let me thank Representative Miner and Senator Chapin for their work on this proposal. I'm here for Senate Bill 309, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF CONFISCATED ANIMALS.

This proposal may not have grabbed my attention if it were not for a situation that occurred recently in the town of Bethlehem, which I represent.

In November of 2012, a Bethlehem animal control officer, along with the Department of Agriculture, Office of Animal Control, and the State Police, served a search and seizure warrant from the State Court regarding 63 dogs housed in Bethlehem.

I'm glad I can be the comedy relief in such a long day in the Environment Committee.

Since the day this warrant was served, the town of Bethlehem has been financially responsible for the care and custody of all of these dogs. Due to the length of this ongoing case, an appeal was heard earlier this month in the appellate court, with no sign of when a decision could be rendered.

Bethlehem cannot adopt out these dogs. The scale of this case is resulting in extraordinary expenses to the town, more than over \$100,000 by the end of their physical year.

Senate Bill 309 is an important protection for municipalities against potential runaway costs associated with the fight against animal abuse. Currently, if an owner of an animal or animal seized by court order does not wish for their animals to be adopted, they can post a \$500 bond to cover reasonable expenses to the municipality.

However, in the case where many animals are involved, \$500 is nearly not enough. This bill would raise that bond requirement to \$500 per animal and would offer an important assurance to our towns and cities that they can go after any perpetrator of animal cruelty or abuse without incurring thousands of dollars in veterinary care and housing costs.

Unfortunately, Senate Bill 309 would not retroactively help the situation in Bethlehem, but it's smart common sense policy going forward and I thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

REP. GENTILE: Senator Kane, we thank you for your testimony and your patience. Any questions? Thank you.

SENATOR KANE: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: We have Martin Mador next, and he will be followed by Representative O'Neill.

MARTIN MADOR: Afternoon. I'm Martin Mador. I'm the legislative and political chair for the Sierra Club. I'll have some very quick comments on S.B. 27 and a couple other bills and all of that within three minute.

SB306  
HB5420  
HB5424  
HB5419  
SB316

Addressing solid waste issues has long been a part of the Sierra Club's environmental portfolio. We're very pleased this bill is going forward. We're pleased it raises the recycling goal, it recognizes that public education is really necessary to -- to raise our recycling rate.

It recognizes the role of incineration is not really a good part of the solution and that we have to move forward.

I want to say that over the past several years, we've established programs for extended producer responsibility, also known as product stewardship. We do this one product at a time. We find this an excellent way to address issues of dealing with our solid waste.

You're very clear. Thank you. Appreciate it.

GORDON GIBSON: Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Bill looks in good shape.

GORDON GIBSON: I'm like -- I'll also say I'm like Pavlov's dog. I heard the bell and I really start getting hungry for supper.

SENATOR MEYER: We all -- we all are.

A VOICE: (Inaudible).

SENATOR MEYER: Yeah. Little one. Marigrace Larke, followed by Amy Patterson. Either of them here? Amy left. Marigrace Larke? Not here. Okay. We're getting there. Okay. Just a few more.

We're going to -- we're now going to take up the town cost of the care of animals and our first witness is -- is Debra Bresch. Here she is.

DEBRA BRESCH: Thanks, Senator Meyer. Thanks, Representative Gentile.

I want to echo Senator Kane, thanks to Senator Chapin and Representative Miner for working on this bill. The ASPCA is a strong supporter of -- of this bill.

We are a strong supporter in general of good forfeiture -- bonding and forfeiture laws and this is -- of which this is an example. When animals sit in shelters during the pendency of a cruelty case, the cost of care often becomes prohibitive, threatening the shelter's ability to serve other animals and serving as a deterrent to future cruelty law enforcement.

SB309

By -- by increasing the cost of the bond to \$500 per animal from \$500 in total, S.B. 309 would appropriately shift the financial burden of caring for seized animals from municipal and state agencies and the taxpayers that support them to those reasonably believed to have engaged in animal cruelty.

In an irony of the -- of -- of, you know, the fact of when animals are -- are seized is that individual is -- would be normally legally required to pay the cost of care of that animal if the animal were in their possession and when the state or the municipality takes that -- those animals, that effectively minimizes that person's obligations if the forfeiture and bonding statute is not adequate.

So again, we really do support the idea of increasing it to \$500 per animal to make this law adequate. The one thing also to mention is that -- which I did not mention in the written testimony, is that from the welfare perspective, the animal welfare perspective, in the event that individual cannot afford the bond, this is an individual who has received due process and accorded -- found that there's, you know, some likelihood that cruelty has occurred and a -- and a bond -- and this bond is -- is necessitated, you know, the individual can't afford the animal, the -- the animals then are relinquished and then can find homes.

Also, when these animals are held for the length of time that -- that a case takes, the animals become less ownable. Their behavior deteriorates. It's -- it's very bad for them. So that -- that is another reason to increase the -- the cost per animal, the bond.

Another very good attribute of this -- this bill is that it reasonably gives municipalities access to the State Animal Abuse and Cost Recovery Account collected from the disposition of prior animal cruelty victims. We would just note -- this is -- I think it would be a small amendment. Right now, the cost recovery account is funded solely by public auction of animal victims.

And I've reached out to the Department of Ag because I don't actually know the mechanics of this public auctions and -- and -- but -- so I don't know whether perhaps this just sort of a throwback, but it -- it does -- it might make sense to also allow the recovery account to be funded by adoptions. Auctions don't necessarily lend themselves to, you know, the best person receiving it -- receiving that animal. And certainly, you know, adoption fees could equally fund the recovery account as much as auction prices.

So with that, again, the, you know, the overarching point is that we strongly support this bill.

SENATOR MEYER: Very clear. Any questions or comments? Thanks, Debra.

DEBRA BRESCH: Oh, thank you.

SENATOR MEYER: Our next witness is Bruce Hyde. Mr. Hyde here? No? Okay. Okay. We're on our final bill, and that's the Bisphenol A bill and we have several -- just a small number of witnesses. Stan Sorkin is first. Good evening, Stan.

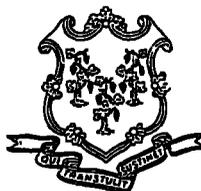
STANLEY SORKIN: Good evening. I feel like it's starting to be Friday date night. I'm Stan Sorkin, president of the Connecticut Food

SB316

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT  
PART 3  
1066 – 1779**

**2014**



State of Connecticut

SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

SENATOR ROBERT J. KANE  
THIRTY-SECOND DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
SUITE 3400  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591  
Capitol (860) 240-8875  
Toll Free (800) 842-1421  
E-mail Rob.Kane@cga.ct.gov  
Website www.SenatorKane.com

DEPUTY MINORITY LEADER PRO TEMPORE AND  
CAUCUS CHAIRMAN FOR POLICY

RANKING MEMBER  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MEMBER  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
REGULATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban and the distinguished members of the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 309, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF CONFISCATED ANIMALS.

This proposal would not have grabbed my attention were it not for a situation that occurred very recently in the Town of Bethlehem, which I proudly represent. In November of 2012, a Bethlehem Animal Control Officer along with the Department of Agriculture Office of Animal Control and the State Police served a search and seizure warrant from the State Court regarding sixty-three dogs housed in Bethlehem. Since the day this warrant was served, the Town of Bethlehem has been financially responsible for the care and custody of all of these dogs.

Due to the length of this ongoing case – an appeal was heard earlier this month in the Appellate Court with no sign when a decision could be rendered – Bethlehem cannot adopt out these dogs. The scale of this case is resulting in extraordinary expenses to the Town – more than one hundred thousand dollars by the end of this fiscal year.

Senate Bill 309 is an important protection for municipalities against potential runaway costs associated with the fight against animal abuse. Currently, if an owner of an animal or animals seized by court order does not wish for their animals to be adopted, they can post a \$500 bond to cover reasonable expenses to the municipality. However in a case where many animals are involved, \$500 is not nearly enough. This bill would raise that bond requirement to \$500 *per animal* and would offer an important assurance to our towns and cities – that they can go after any perpetrator of animal cruelty or abuse without incurring thousands of dollars in veterinary care and housing costs.

Unfortunately Senate Bill 309 would not retroactively help the situation in Bethlehem, but it is a smart, common-sense policy going forward. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Rob Kane  
Deputy Minority Leader Pro Tempore

Debora M. Bresch, Esq.  
Senior State Legislative Director  
MidAtlantic Region  
Government Relations  
[debora\\_bresch@aspca.org](mailto:debora_bresch@aspca.org)  
P/F. 908.232.0364  
Cell 917 679 1008

**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 309  
AAC Municipal Costs for the Care of Confiscated Animals**

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), on behalf of our over 20,000 Connecticut supporters, urges the Joint Environment Committee to favorably report S.B. 309 (AAC Municipal Costs for the Care of Confiscated Animals).

When animals sit in shelters during the pendency of a cruelty case, the cost of care often becomes prohibitive, threatening the shelters' ability to serve other animals and serving as a deterrent to future cruelty law enforcement. By increasing the cost of the bond to \$500 per animal, S.B. 309 would appropriately shift the financial burden of caring for seized animals from municipal and state agencies, and the taxpayers that support them, to those reasonably believed to have engaged in animal cruelty.

Ironically, while owners/suspected abusers would be legally obligated to pay for the cost of caring for animals in their possession, the seizure of their animals due to cruelty currently effectively minimizes this obligation and instead places this burden on municipalities and the state. S.B. 309 addresses this illogic and rightfully allocates the cost of care obligation to the owner/alleged abuser.

S.B. 309 would also reasonably give municipalities access to the state Animal Abuse and Cost Recovery Account ("Account") collected from the disposition of prior animal cruelty victims. This, too, would help ensure that municipalities are able to properly enforce Connecticut's anti-cruelty provisions and care for animal victims. **In this connection, the ASPCA would request a simple amendment - that it be made clear that in addition to public auction, adoption be considered a viable method of disposition of animal victims and raising money for the Account.**

The Connecticut public wants animals to be treated humanely and animal cruelty to be investigated. S.B. 309 is the only way to ensure that municipalities have the resources to accomplish this.

Sincerely,



Debora M. Bresch, Esq.



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Commissioner

Steven K. Reviczky  
Commissioner

001101



Phone: 860-713-2501  
Fax: 860-713-2514

**S.B. No. 309 (RAISED) ENVIRONMENT. 'AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF CONFISCATED ANIMALS'**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture recognizes the importance and seriousness of the circumstances that led to the development and proposal of S.B. No. 309 (RAISED) ENVIRONMENT. 'AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF CONFISCATED ANIMALS.'

Eradicating animal abuse and neglect is one of the agency's priorities. The agency has and continues to work closely with municipalities on this issue and recognizes that rapidly accumulating costs of caring for animals confiscated in such cases can be an unforeseen consequence of this important work.

**Environment Committee Testimony for  
SB 309, HB 5422 SB 316 and HB 5417**

**Karen Laski  
Board Member of CT Votes for Animals**

Hello Everyone,

**I would like to express my support for SB 309, An Act concerning municipal care costs for confiscated animals. The town of Bethlehem has incurred tremendous costs for a cruelty case that has been appealing for months. It is important for the animal abuser to assume more financial responsibility of his or her crime and this bill will be an incentive for people to follow laws for animal welfare.**

**I support HB 5422, An Act concerning awareness of heartworm disease and the standard dog license form. Having a check-off box on a dog license form about whether heartworm preventative is being used will encourage people to consider using the medication if they aren't already. I think when people are paying their dog license fees and see the heartworm note added, they will look at heartworm prevention as more of a requirement rather than an option.**

**I also support SB 316, An Act requiring the labeling of food products that are packaged in materials that contain Bisphenol-A. This bill would encourage companies not to use BPA in their packaging and would help consumers to make safe choices.**

**I oppose HB 5417. An Act establishing a season for the taking of glass eels. Young eels are an important part of the eco-system and conservationists are trying hard to keep their journey from the Sound unencumbered.**

Thank you for hearing me today.

Karen Laski  
279 Fern St.  
Manchester, CT 06040