



Statement of

Jo-Anne Basile, Executive Director

CT Votes for Animals

In Support of

HB 5575 AA REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO REVISE
MUNICIPAL ANIMAL SHELTER REGULATIONS

Before the Environment Committee

February 15, 2023

Co-Chairs Senator Lopes and Representative Gresko, Vice Chairs, Ranking Minority and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee

CT Votes for Animals is a grass roots animal advocacy organization. CVA is dedicated to improving and protecting the lives of all CT animals by championing legislative changes at the CT General Assembly and mobilizing animal supporters in every legislative district of the state.

CT Votes for Animals (CVA) is pleased to testify today in strong support of HB 5575, requiring revisions to the municipal animal shelter regulations. As you have heard, the current rules governing municipal shelters are antiquated and woefully out of date with even minimum standards of care. With some exceptions, many municipal shelters labor under regulations dating back to 1963 when we referred to the facilities and caregivers as dog pounds and dog catchers. We've come a long way in understanding the needs of animals and the residents of Connecticut are demanding improvements to the local facilities that are the temporary guardian of our most vulnerable animals.

HB 5575 offers some needed improvements. First it addresses a significant need to bring the temperature requirements within the reasonable range of 55 to 80 degrees. As we struggle through climate change, we can expect to see more extreme weather patterns develop. Last August's run of more than 20 days of excessive heat made it unbearable for people and animals. There were reports of some shelters where the inside temperature exceeded even the old rules of 90 degrees. This proposal will put an end to such extremes and place municipal shelters in line with other state regulated

entities such as private shelters and kennels. It should be noted that not only are animals the beneficiaries of better heating and cooling, but also the animal control officers and shelter volunteers at the shelter will now be able to work in safe environments.

HB 5575 also makes some needed improvements to basic sanitary and humane practices that should be the norm for any facility charged with caring for animals.

These simple and humane rule changes are needed now and CT Votes for Animals strongly urges support for HB 5355. While a more comprehensive review of the rules may be forthcoming in the future, we need to enact these changes this year to protect those animals entrusted to the care of our cities and towns.

Jo-Anne Basile

Jo-Anne Basile Executive Director, CT Votes for Animals
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Testimony from Susan B. Linker

Board Chair CT Votes for Animals and Chief Executive Officer, Our Companions Animal Rescue

Testimony in Support of HB 5575- AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO REVISE MUNICIPAL ANIMAL SHELTER REGULATIONS.

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to express my strong support of House Bill 5575.

Currently the regulations and shelter standards for municipal shelters date back from 1963. This bill would require basic humane standards that include a reasonable minimum and maximum temperatures for the shelter. It would set temperatures at a minimum of 55 degrees and a maximum of 80 degrees, bringing them in alignment with the regulations and standards for Private Animal Shelters.

Sadly, without these updates, animals in municipal shelters suffer from sweltering and freezing conditions. This bill would also require municipal shelters to provide proper and timely veterinary care of injured or ill animals and prohibit incompatible animals and species to be housed together. Finally, this would also require proper cleaning and disinfecting practices to eliminate the spread of disease.

All these standards are basic, humane practices. Not requiring our animals to be treated this way in our municipal shelters is inhumane and should be unacceptable in our state.

I strongly urge you to support HB 5575 which would provide long-overdue basic care standards for the vulnerable, homeless animals in our municipal shelter system.

Testimony Presented to the Environment Committee

February 15, 2023

Anne Foley
Member, Board of Directors
Connecticut Votes for Animals

Testimony Supporting
Senate Bill 962 AAC the Use of Certain Rodenticides
and
House Bill 5575 AA Requiring the Department of Agriculture to Revise Municipal
Animal Shelter Regulations

Senator Lopes, Representative Gresko and distinguished members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer support for Senate Bill 962 and House Bill 5575.

Senate Bill 962, AAC the Use of Certain Rodenticides, would prohibit use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) in the state except in circumstances consistent with the state's public health code. The impact of this proposal would stop the huge death toll inflicted upon wildlife who consume rodenticide poisoned rodents. Rodenticides are counterproductive to rodent control by poisoning, harming, and killing the natural predators that help regulate rodent populations throughout Connecticut. Alternatives to these poisons exist and should be used.

I am hopeful that Connecticut will keep up with the progress made in our neighboring states of Massachusetts and New Jersey in following California's lead on banning SGARs statewide. Please support SB 962.

House Bill 5575 AA Requiring the Department of Agriculture to Revise Municipal Animal Shelter Regulations would ensure basic safety for cats and dogs who are residing in animal shelters. The provisions of the bill provide for only the most basic protections from danger and risk of injury. These animals deserve to be treated humanely and it is our responsibility as humans to spare them undeserved pain.

Although dogs and cats cannot voice their concerns directly to you, justice demands that we consider and respect their interests and I hope you will do so by supporting HB 5575.

I respectfully request that the committee act favorably on these two bills.

Name: Linda Pleva

Title:

Organization or Agency:

Topic: HB05575 - AA REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO REVISE MUNICIPAL...

Supports

Testimony:

I support SB962. I live in an area that is nearby to both wetlands and a waste management company. The waste management company attracts rodents while the wetlands attracts a variety of birds of prey. It is very disturbing to me to know that rodenticides are being used to control the rodent population and in turn killing many of the birds. There are alternatives to using these rodenticides and I support a ban on them.

I support HB 5575. As a member of a non-profit animal advocacy organization, I have direct knowledge regarding many of CT's municipal animal shelters. In fact, certain non-profits in CT have felt a need to donate money to supply municipal shelters with heating and cooling equipment so that animals housed there do not suffer from extreme heat or cold. Conditions at some of these shelters, in my opinion are inhumane and set a very poor example for potential adopters/owners/rescuers who visit the shelter. Municipal shelters MUST have a higher standard of care for the animals they are to protect. HB 5575 would help although more improvements are needed.

Name: Karen Laski

Title: Advisory Board member

Organization or Agency: CT Votes for Animals

Topic: HB05575 - AA REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO REVISE MUNICIPAL...

Supports

Testimony:

Support for Senate Bill 962 and House Bill 5575

Dear Honorable Environment Committee Members,

I support House Bill 5575 Requiring the Department of Agriculture to Revise Municipal Animal Shelter Regulations because certain comfort standards are lacking for animals in some municipal shelters. I also support Senate Bill 962, The Use of Certain Rodenticides in order to cause less harm to animals in our environment.

Thank you,

Karen Laski

Manchester