

# Environment Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6277

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADOPTION OF ANIMALS FROM ANIMAL

**Title:** BREEDERS AND ANIMAL TESTING FACILITIES.

**Vote Date:** 3/28/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/24/2025

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

### Co-Sponsors:

Rep. Dominique Johnson, 143rd Dist.

Rep. Kerry S. Wood, 29th Dist.

Rep. Sarah Keitt, 134th Dist.

Rep. Aundre Bumgardner, 41st Dist.

Rep. Frank Smith, 118th Dist.

Rep. Anne Dauphinais, 44th Dist.

Rep. Nicole Klarides-Ditria, 105th Dist.

Rep. Cara Christine Pavalock-D'Amato, 77th Dist.

Rep. Laurie Sweet, 91st Dist.

Rep. Michael "MJ" Shannon, 117th Dist.

Rep. Patrick S. Boyd, 50th Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to require that all breeders and animal testing facilities that have dogs, cats, guinea pigs, or rabbits that they no longer need offer these animals up for adoption, so long as they don't pose a health or safety risk to the public. It requires that they keep the animals for six weeks after they notify an animal adoption or rescue organization that the animal is available before euthanizing the animal and exempts the breeders and testing facilities from liability for any harm caused by the animals once they were adopted.

There are many animals that are used for testing or breeding each year for the benefit of people. These animals are often subject to institutional settings and experimentation. Requiring testing and breeding facilities to offer these animals up for adoption, when possible, would increase the likelihood that these animals would be able to live as pets rather than being euthanized after they were no longer being used.

### Substitute Language LCO 6277:

The substitute language replaces the underlying bill. It would modify the current law requiring that higher education offer dogs and cats used for research and testing up for adoption when

no longer in use. It extends this requirement to additionally apply to guinea pigs, rabbits, and ferrets.

The substitute language would extend the current legal treatment of dogs and cats in these situations to other animals who could also benefit from being adopted into homes. These modifications were made to the original bill after the public hearing of the bill and feedback from stakeholders.

#### **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None expressed.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

##### **[The Animal Caucus](#)**

The Animal Caucus submitted written testimony in support of the bill. They believe that the bill would help promote the compassionate treatment of animals and show Connecticut's commitment to animal welfare.

##### **[Kevin Cormack](#)**

Kevin Cormack submitted written testimony in support of the bill. He believes that allowing these animals to be adopted after they have been used for testing is the humane thing to do. He also strongly suggested that the bill should include domestic ferrets, as they are often used in testing and are companion animals.

##### **[Barry Londeree, Program Manager of Animal Research Issues, Humane World for Animals](#)**

##### **[Annie Hornish, Connecticut State Director, Humane World for Animals](#)**

Humane World for Animals submitted written testimony in support of the bill. The testimony details the importance expanding the current law so that all animal testing facilities are required to offer testing animals for adoption when possible. It discussed how expanding these programs would benefit the animals, the laboratory workers at testing facilities, and the people who adopt these animals.

##### **[Susan Linker, Board Chair, CT Votes for Animals](#)**

Susan Linker submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She discussed the importance of finding homes for testing animals and noted her appreciation for the fact that "... this bill emphasizes the importance of responsible animal adoption, ensuring that animals from these environments are placed in homes that can meet their needs." She believes that this bill would have a positive impact for the animals that were adopted as well as the people who adopted them.

#### **The following people submitted the same piece of written testimony in support of the bill:**

**[Della Farney, Board Member, F.A.C.T.](#)**

**[Glen Farney, Board of Directors, F.A.C.T.](#)**

**[Vanessa Gruden, Executive Director, F.A.C.T.](#)**

The testimony discussed the importance of allowing animals to be adopted when they are no longer being used for testing and suggested that ferrets should be included in the bill. It also

noted that the ferret association has rescued numerous ferrets from research facilities and was able to find adoptive homes for all of these animals.

**60 People submitted written testimony expressing general support of the bill.** They discussed the alternatives available to animal testing, and how it is more humane for the animals to make sure that they can be adopted and live in a home environment after they are no longer being used by the breeding or testing facilities. Much of the testimony specifically noted that the option for these animals to be adopted should be extended not only to dogs and cats but to animals like guinea pigs, rabbits, and ferrets as well.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

### [Paul Burnham, President, Connecticut Association of Fairs](#)

Paul Burnham submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He discussed how the bill could negatively impact the farming industry, who would be affected by the bill because livestock farmers are considered animal breeders. He also noted that it could make it harder for 4-H and youth programs to purchase livestock from farms.

### [Dr. Linda Dalessio](#)

Dr. Linda Dalessio submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. She believes that the language of the bill is too vague, and doesn't do enough to ensure that the animals being adopted out of testing facilities are safe to be adopted out without causing a risk to public health.

### [Michael Marucci, Member, CT Valley Vizsla Club](#)

Michael Marucci submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He believes that breeders and animal testing facilities have more knowledge about their animals than a rescue organization would be, and are therefore best suited to making decisions about their care.

### [Tracey McDougall, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau](#)

Tracey McDougall submitted written testimony expressing concerns with the bill. In her testimony, she discussed the provision that would require that rabbit breeders offer up rabbits for adoption when they are no longer of use and expressed concern that this would apply to farmers and could ultimately discourage farmers from breeding rabbits for meat. She recommended that the bill be amended to include language that would specifically exempt farmers raising rabbits for meat.

### [Stacey Ober, Government Relations Manager, American Kennel Club](#)

Stacy Ober submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. She suggested that breeders often have programs already in place to rehome dogs that they are no longer using, and that because they know their dogs they are the ones best suited to find appropriate homes for them. She also believes that the phrase "no longer needed", as used in the bill, is unclear.

### [Dr. Dana Walker](#)

Dr. Walker submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. She discussed the threat that adopting out testing animals could pose to public safety, and the administrative and financial burden that this bill would place on institutions conducting animal testing. She noted that research animals are not bred or raised in the same ways that pets are and are often not suitable to be pets. She believes that often adopting out these animals is not actually more

compassionate that euthanizing them, as they can struggle to adapt to a new environment, and there are no guarantees that the adopters will be qualified to deal with their unique medical and behavioral needs. She suggests that the decision of what should happen to testing animals after they are no longer being used should be determined by the testing institution, as they have the best understanding of these animals and what the most safe and humane option is for them.

**5 people submitted written testimony expressing general opposition to the bill.** They suggested that breeding and research facilities are knowledgeable about their animals and are therefore best suited to decide how these animals should be placed once they are no longer being used.

**Reported by: Lauren Kaiser Krause**

**Date: April 4, 2025**