

Co-Chairs Rep. Steve Stafstrom and Sen. Gary Winfield my name is Charles DellaRocco and I am currently a State Animal Control Officer with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and I would like the committee to address some concerns I have with Bill #: LCO 3471. I have been involved in law enforcement for over thirty-three years and when I recently became an State Animal Control Officer I noticed that there is a large disconnect within the law pertaining to State and Municipal ACOs.

I would like to ask the Judiciary Committee to look at Attorney General Opinion 86-045 as well as Attorney General Opinion 93-028. Since this bill has been put out I have been contacted by Municipal Animal Control Officers asking if this bill will affect them in anyway. One question specifically was about the removing of qualified immunity for police officers and would this affect them? From those two Attorney General Opinions it is clear that both State and Municipal Animal Control Officers have arrest powers under CGS 22-328 and CGS 22-330 as well as being defined a "police officer" under the general statute. This bill does not address these animal control officers or makes it more clear as if it will be affected.

Another question I received was pertaining to the use and access of body cams. Animal Control Officers throughout the state, wear a uniform that make them look like police officers and are treated as police officers by the public. So the question presented to me was are Animal Control Officers able to get body cams or not?

This bill does not address Animal Control Officers as well as other "police officers" part of a "law enforcement unit". One suggestion that was offered was the adding of POST-certified State and Municipal Animal Control Officers to be designated as peace officers.

I would like to thank you in advance for addressing these issues.

Thank you,

Charles A. DellaRocco