

House Republican Press Release

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Mike Alberts Participates in Pet Protection Bill Signing



State Rep. Mike Alberts, R-50th District, Brooklyn, Eastford, Hampton, Pomfret, Woodstock, has joined Gov. M. Jodi Rell for a public bill signing ceremony at the Connecticut Human Society of a new law to protect pets in domestic violence cases.

"This law protects, not only persons who are victims of domestic abuse, but also their pets," said Rep. Alberts. "There have been cases where pets have been tortured, killed and mutilated in domestic situations involving violent individuals. This law gives assurance to domestic violence victims that their pets will not be attacked by a violent household member."

The legislation, SB-284, permits courts to issue orders of protection for animals owned or kept by victims of family violence, stalking, or harassment. The orders may prohibit respondents or defendants from injuring or threatening to injure the animals. In family violence cases, the order may be a civil restraining order, or a criminal protective order.

The new law takes effect October 1, 2007.

Courts typically issue restraining and protective orders to protect victims of family violence crimes from threatened or further harm. Courts may issue protective orders for victims of stalking or victims of first or second degree harassment who reasonably fear for their safety. Restraining and protective orders may, among other things, prohibit the respondents (or defendants in criminal cases) from restraining, threatening, harassing, assaulting, molesting, sexually assaulting, or attacking the victim, or entering the victim's home. Restraining orders are generally effective for six months. Protective orders are a condition of bail or other release from incarceration.

Criminal violation of a restraining or protective order is a class D felony, punishable by up to five years in prison, a \$ 5,000 fine, or both.

Rep. Alberts co-sponsored the legislation, which passed the state Senate in a unanimous 35-0 vote and the House by a 143-4 vote.

He serves the 50th Assembly District of Brooklyn, Eastford, Hampton, Pomfret and Woodstock in the state House of Representatives.