

House Republican Press Release

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REP. HETHERINGTON'S BILL PROTECTING PETS PASSES LEGISLATURE



HARTFORD – State Rep. John Hetherington (R-New Canaan, Wilton) announced that Connecticut House of Representatives has passed Senate Bill 284 that would authorize judges to include pets under protection orders issued in domestic violence cases.

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

“I am very pleased,” said State Representative John Hetherington (R-125), “I proposed an identical bill in the House and I was gratified when this measure came from the Senate.

“Pets can be a point of vulnerability when someone is a target,” Hetherington continued, “Concern for a pet may provide a real opportunity to hurt a victim.”

“We have to continue all of our efforts to reduce domestic violence and address its cruel impact. This is just one small part, but it is important,” concluded the Representative.

The Connecticut measure resembles a law enacted in Maine last year. 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.

The bill now awaits the signature of Governor M. Jodi Rell.