

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



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REP. URBAN EXPLORES LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND DOMESTIC ABUSE AT QUINNIPIAC LAW SCHOOL SEMINAR

State Rep. Diana Urban (D-North Stonington, Stonington) was asked to speak at the Connecticut Bar Association’s seminar, “The Violence Gateway: From Animal Abuse to Domestic Abuse and Beyond.” The seminar, hosted by the Quinnipiac University School of Law, addressed the question of the linkage between violence against animals and violence against humans and the role that enforcement of animal cruelty laws can play in reducing incidents of violence.

“It was so gratifying to see the interest and concern for the link between animal cruelty and child abuse and domestic violence. I have worked hard to raise awareness. This seminar was simply excellent and I look forward to working with organizer and Connecticut Bar Member Colette Griffin and colleagues to continue to insist that we take this link seriously,” Rep. Urban said.

In 2014, Rep. Urban spearheaded the passage of the “cross-reporting bill,” which requires that the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DOAG) share information related to animal cruelty and investigations of child abuse. The law helps to better protect children from violence while at the same time raises awareness of animal cruelty.

Rep. Urban has also advocated for increasing prosecution rates among suspected animal abusers. Animal abuse cases are handled very differently than human abuse cases in court, with very few even being heard. Yet many of the most recent school shooters in the last 10 years were found to have abused animals before moving to harming humans. By ensuring that more incidents of animal abuse are prosecuted, we can better protect more animals and people.

“Connecticut is leading the nation on exploring the relationship between animal abuse and domestic abuse,” said Rep. Urban. “Research shows that abusing animals is a strong predictor for future violent behavior. I am very proud of the steps Connecticut has taken to explore the relationship between violence against animals and violence against people and believe it is vitally important to family safety that we continue to explore this link.”

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