



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 5217 WITH CHANGES**

AAC THE USE OF CERTAIN RODENTICIDES.

February 28, 2024

**To:** Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Hochadel and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Harding and Rep. Callahan, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

**From:** Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 5217 to prohibit the use and sale of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARS).

**Wildlife rehabilitators, biologists, and state residents are seeing Connecticut's Birds of Prey dying from rodenticide poisoning at an alarming rate.** Rodenticide is the cause of death for the majority of these birds who are brought to rehabilitators, indicating that there is a much larger problem in the wild than people are aware of.

Rodenticides are commonly located in dark gray bait boxes next to buildings, in parks, and anywhere that people want to eliminate rodents. However, these **rodenticides pose a greater threat to non-target wildlife, pets, and other animals that prey upon these rodents.** Rodenticides do not work instantly, and rodents who consume this poison carry it with them for a period of time before dying. Rodents leave the traps and are caught by their natural predators which in turn die a slow and painful death.

The rodenticide bill as currently drafted is missing the core provision needed to prevent the widespread use of this poison by pest control companies. **HB 5217 must prohibit the use—not just restrict the sale—of these toxic chemicals** to effectively protect wildlife and pets from consuming these poisons.

First and second-generation anticoagulant rodenticide poisons work by preventing blood from clotting. The victims die slowly from internal bleeding within a few days. **These second-generation anticoagulants were created to be more toxic and last longer in a victim's body.**

The only known antidote may work if it is administered immediately, but most wildlife hide any illness until it is too late.

There are safe and effective alternatives to rodenticides, such as **ContraPest**, a contraceptive for rats. Hartford conducted a pilot study in 2021 in Bushnell Park with overwhelmingly positive results. It only has a fifteen-minute half-life, removing the risk for secondhand poisoning. ContraPest, in conjunction with other measures to better manage trash and food attractants, is proving to be the best non-lethal solution that is available now.

CTLCV urges the committee to **vote yes in support of HB 5217 that includes the provisions of the bill proposed in 2023 (SB 962) that:**

- 1)** includes a ban on sale, use, and application of SGARS
- 2)** spells out appropriate exemptions for agriculture food production sites, food warehouses, breweries, wineries, medical facilities or for infestations associated with a public health crisis
- 3)** fully applies to places where people eat, live, shop, and work such as grocery stores, restaurants, homes, schools, and office buildings

Without the ban, licensed pesticide applicators will routinely continue to overuse this overkill method.

Thank you for considering these comments as the Environment Committee works to prevent the **unnecessary poisoning of our state's wildlife.**

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