



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

June 15, 2021

Stamford Board of Representatives

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Dear Honorable Representatives:

We hope this letter finds you well. We understand that you will soon be voting on ordinance [LR30.103](#), which would prohibit the unattended tethering of dogs. On behalf of our more than 74,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, more than 2,200 of whom proudly reside in Stamford, we respectfully urge you to vote “yea” on prohibiting continuous tethering and making the city a safer and more humane place for all.

Deprived of everything that enriches their lives and left to endure sweltering days and frigid nights, chained dogs suffer from a lack of exercise and stimulation as well as from frustration, isolation, and loneliness. Out of sight and out of mind, they’re in constant danger of becoming entangled and unable to reach food, water, or shelter; hanging themselves; or being attacked by other animals or cruel passersby. They’re often victims of neglect. In [2018](#), a dog was found on New Year’s Day frozen solid and still chained to her doghouse in Hartford. Officials estimate that she could have been there for up to a month before she was found. In [2016](#), a man was charged with cruelty to animals after a neighbor called police to complain about a dog he had seen chained in all weather extremes. Officers found the German shepherd tied with a 5-foot leash,

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with no access to food or water. He had frostbite on the tips of his ears and was 20 to 25 pounds underweight, and a veterinary examination “found it to be a blatant starvation/neglect case.”

Dogs are highly social pack animals. When kept chained, their emotional and social needs are also ignored, which often leads to aggressive behavior. Connecticut is no stranger to serious attacks by chained dogs. In [2018](#), a man was walking to the train station in Fairfield when two loose dogs ran after him and one bit his leg. The victim had to be taken to the hospital. The dogs’ owner stated that he kept them chained. A [few years ago](#), a 74-year-old man in Groton sustained serious injuries when he tried to protect his 8-pound silky terrier from an attacking dog who had broken free from a chain. The terrier died from her injuries, and the elderly victim’s wife said that the same dog had attacked her husband and dog in the past.

The indisputable connection between continuous chaining and canine aggression is recognized by national agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) as well as by renowned animal behaviorists. Please consider the following information:

- Tufts University Professor Dr. Nicholas H. Dodman says, “Chaining dogs makes them more aggressive—the shorter the chain, the greater the aggression.”
- A study coauthored by two CDC physicians found that “[b]iting dogs were significantly more likely ... to be chained.” According to the study, *chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to attack* than those who aren’t tethered.
- Research coauthored by CDC officials found that nearly 30% of the 38 children (between the ages of 1 and 9) killed by dogs in the U.S. between 1989 and 1994 died after “wandering too close to a chained dog.”
- The AVMA gives the following advice to guardians: “Never tether or chain your dog because this can contribute to aggressive behavior.”
- Dr. Elizabeth Shull, former president of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, states, “In addition to frustration, the constant physical restraint promotes excessive territoriality, which may be manifested as aggression. These attacks are unnecessary as they are easily preventable by using a secure fence for containment.”

Hundreds of jurisdictions across the country recognize the dangerous consequences of chaining dogs and have put commonsense laws in place to mitigate these risks. Many of those areas have found that the simplest, most enforceable ordinance is a ban on unattended tethering. **We respectfully urge Stamford to join these communities by voting “yea” on LR30.103.**

Thank you for your time and compassion and for all that you do to keep Stamford safe and humane for all its residents.

Sincerely,



Daphna Nachminovitch
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