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Wednesday, February 19

Re: HB 6915, An Act Concerning the Use of Second Generation Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides

Dear Senator Lopes, Representative Parker, Senator Hochadel, Representative Bumgartner, and esteemed members of the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of *HB 6915, An Act Concerning the Use Of Second Generation Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides*.

Every faith tradition talks about humankind's role as stewards of the planet. Often, people misinterpret scripture to place humans as above all life and permitted to treat the earth however we want. But study of sacred texts contradicts this – throughout scriptures, we are instructed to be compassionate and responsible caretakers, living lives of gratitude and respect.

In the Jewish and Christian faiths, this responsibility is evident in the fact that one of Adam's first tasks is to name all of the animals. The concept of *tza'ar ba'alei chayim* in the Talmud prohibits the unnecessary suffering of animals. Even as G-d permits people to eat animals, he does not allow us to cause unnecessary pain and suffering. In the Buddhist tradition, the first precept prevents killing, and care for animals and wildlife is found in the earliest writings of Buddhist writings. And throughout Muslim writings, the Prophet (swt) calls on Muslims to treat animals with gentleness and compassion.

In our faith traditions, we see a consistent thread of treating animals with kindness and preventing unnecessary suffering. It is through that lens that we are supporting *HB 6915, An Act Concerning the Use of Second Generation Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides*.

These rat poisons cause slow, painful deaths, and it is not an effective solution. SGARS cause rapid die-off of rodent populations, followed by a rapid explosion in the birth rate. Removing what attracts rodents and excluding them from structures is the only proven way to reduce rodent population.

SGARs cause cruel deaths to the predators that eat dead rodents as well. SGARs kill our beautiful birds of prey, such as hawks, raptors, and bald eagles. This is especially heartbreaking in light of Connecticut's successful efforts to restore our eagle population. SGARs also kill predators such as foxes, coyotes, and bobcats, who are necessary to support our ecosystems. In addition, pets who eat the dead rodents are also at risk and will die if not brought to the vet in time.

IREJN and our members urge passage of *HB 6915, An Act Concerning the Use of Second Generation Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides*, which will prevent the unnecessary suffering and death of animals and wildlife. Thank you for your time.

Very best regards,

Terri Eickel, Executive Director