



Family Court of the State of Rhode Island  
One Dorrance Plaza  
Providence, RI 02903

MICHAEL B. FORTE  
CHIEF JUDGE

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Robert Craven  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: 2025 - H 5125

Dear Chairman Craven and  
Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to comment on **2025 - H 5125** entitled "Domestic Abuse Prevention". The Court supports the view that possession of pets and other household pets should be addressed in a domestic abuse protection Order. The Court recognizes that companion animals can be threatened, held hostage and otherwise abused.

The Rhode Island Supreme Court has recognized "pets" as important property that can and should be addressed in a divorce proceeding.

We believe that pets can be adequately protected within a protective Order that grants possession of the pet to the victim, while reserving legal determinations regarding "Custody" for the children of the parties.

The Court respectfully thanks the committee for this opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.

Very truly yours,

Michael B. Forte  
Chief Judge

MBF:nmp