



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 644

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5566

House of Representatives, April 15, 2026

The Committee on Judiciary reported through REP. STAFSTROM of the 129th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCELERATED REHABILITATION IN THE CASE OF ANIMAL CRUELTY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 54-56e of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2026*):

4 (c) This section shall not be applicable: (1) To any person charged
5 with (A) a class A felony, (B) a class B felony, except a violation of
6 subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of section 53a-122 that does not
7 involve the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force
8 against another person, or a violation of subdivision (3) of subsection (a)
9 of section 53a-122 that does not involve the use, attempted use or
10 threatened use of physical force against another person and does not
11 involve a violation by a person who is a public official, as defined in
12 section 1-110, or a state or municipal employee, as defined in section 1-
13 110, or (C) a violation of section 53a-70b of the general statutes, revision
14 of 1958, revised to January 1, 2019, or section 14-227a or 14-227m,

15 subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of section 14-227n, subdivision (2)
16 of subsection (a) of section 53-21 or section 53a-56b, 53a-60d, 53a-70, 53a-
17 70a, 53a-71, except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection, 53a-
18 72a, 53a-72b, 53a-90a, 53a-196e or 53a-196f, (2) to any person charged
19 with a crime or motor vehicle violation who, as a result of the
20 commission of such crime or motor vehicle violation, causes the death
21 of another person, (3) to any person accused of a family violence crime
22 as defined in section 46b-38a who (A) is eligible for the pretrial family
23 violence education program established under section 46b-38c, or (B)
24 has previously had the pretrial family violence education program
25 invoked in such person's behalf, (4) to any person charged with a
26 violation of section 21a-267, 21a-279 or 21a-279a, who (A) is eligible for
27 the pretrial drug education and community service program established
28 under section 54-56i or the pretrial drug intervention and community
29 service program established under section 54-56q, or (B) has previously
30 had (i) the pretrial drug education program, (ii) the pretrial drug
31 education and community service program established under the
32 provisions of section 54-56i, or (iii) the pretrial drug intervention and
33 community service program established under section 54-56q, invoked
34 on such person's behalf, (5) unless good cause is shown, to (A) any
35 person charged with a class C felony, or (B) any person charged with
36 committing a violation of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 53a-
37 71 while such person was less than four years older than the other
38 person, (6) to any person charged with a violation of section 9-359 or 9-
39 359a, (7) to any person charged with a motor vehicle violation (A) while
40 operating a commercial motor vehicle, as defined in section 14-1, or (B)
41 who holds a commercial driver's license or commercial learner's permit
42 at the time of the violation, (8) to any person charged with a violation of
43 subdivision (6) of subsection (a) of section 53a-60, (9) to a health care
44 provider or vendor participating in the state's Medicaid program
45 charged with a violation of section 53a-122 or subdivision (3) of
46 subsection (a) of section 53a-123, [or] (10) to any person charged with a
47 violation of section 15-132a, 15-133 or 15-140n, or (11) to any person
48 charged with a violation of section 22-329 or 53-247 who has previously
49 participated in the program pursuant to this section, unless fifteen or

50 more years have passed since the date of dismissal by the court of any
51 charge or charges for which the program was invoked on the
52 defendant's behalf.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	54-56e(c)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Subsec. (c), a reference to the date of dismissal was added for internal consistency.

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Correction, Dept.; Judicial Dept. (Probation)	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill prohibits individuals charged with certain animal cruelty crimes from participating in the accelerated rehabilitation (AR) program if they have already participated in the program within the past 15 years, resulting in a minimal potential cost to the Department of Correction and the Judicial Department for incarceration or probation, to the extent any individuals who would have been eligible for AR are no longer eligible because of the bill. On average, the marginal cost to the state for incarcerating an offender for the year is \$3,300¹ while the average marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than \$600² each year for adults and \$450 each year for juveniles.

¹ Inmate marginal cost is based on increased consumables (e.g., food, clothing, water, sewage, living supplies, etc.) This does not include a change in staffing costs or utility expenses because these expenses would only be realized if a unit or facility opened.

² Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant. This does not include a cost for additional supervision by a probation officer unless a new offense is anticipated to result in enough additional offenders to require additional probation officers.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of individuals who would have been eligible for AR.

OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5566

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCELERATED REHABILITATION IN THE CASE OF ANIMAL CRUELTY.

SUMMARY

This bill generally prohibits people charged with certain animal cruelty crimes from participating in the pretrial diversionary program, accelerated rehabilitation (AR) (see BACKGROUND) if they have already participated in the program. The bill makes an exception if it is at least 15 years since the prior charges were dismissed under the program. Existing law already limits defendants to using the program once, unless, among other things, at least 10 years have passed since the prior charges were dismissed under the program. Therefore, violators of second or subsequent animal cruelty crimes are already generally ineligible for the program.

The bill applies to the primary animal cruelty crimes which are primarily C and D felonies: cruelty to animals, malicious or intentional cruelty to animals, engaging in exhibition of animal fighting, and intentionally injuring or killing police animals or dogs in volunteer canine service and rescue teams. It also applies to the crime of interfering with or obstructing or resisting an animal control officer or law enforcement officer in carrying out their duty to prevent animal cruelty, which is a class D misdemeanor. Existing law prohibits people charged with a class A felony, most class B felonies, class C felonies (unless good cause is shown), and certain other crimes from participating in AR.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

ELEMENTS OF ANIMAL CRUELTY CRIMES INELIGIBLE FOR AR

Under the bill, an individual is generally ineligible for AR if he or she:

1. maliciously and intentionally maims, mutilates, tortures, wounds, or kills an animal;
2. knowingly (a) owns, possesses, keeps, or trains an animal engaged in a fighting exhibition for amusement or gain; (b) possesses, keeps, or trains an animal to engage in such an exhibition; (c) permits such an exhibition to take place on premises under his or her control; (d) acts as a judge or spectator for such an exhibition; or (e) bets or wagers on the outcome of such an exhibition; or
3. intentionally injures (a) an animal while the animal is performing its duties under a peace officer’s supervision or (b) a dog that is a member of a volunteer canine search and rescue team while the dog is performing its duties under an active team member’s supervision.

BACKGROUND

Accelerated Rehabilitation

AR is a pretrial diversionary program that allows certain criminal defendants charged with certain crimes or motor vehicle violations to avoid prosecution and incarceration by successfully completing a court-sanctioned, community-based treatment program. Defendants who successfully complete the program have their charges dismissed (CGS § 54-56e).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 41 Nay 0 (03/30/2026)