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Subject: Backyard Chickens
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Hello, Mr. Mayor, City Councilors, and Madam Clerk.

My name is Francesca Brown. I know I won't be testifying, so this is what I would say: For twenty-two months I have worked and waited, hoping for a change that would allow me to have chickens. I have gone door-to-door knocking, spoken to an avian vet, started multiple petitions, and visited an elementary school that keeps chickens and includes them in curriculums. I have learned so much more about chickens. They're not the dirty farm animals some people may assume they are. They are intelligent pets.

Every Sunday my mother and I volunteer at Live and Let Live Farm, a non-profit rescue and sanctuary. We care for the poultry. I've met many chickens there, and I can say first hand that they're not at all smelly. Ten chickens produce as much waste as a 40-pound dog, and chicken waste can be used as fertilizer.

According to the Exotic and Bird Clinic of New England, chickens don't need an annual check-up, and they aren't likely to transfer diseases to healthy humans.

A dog bark is typically around 90 sound decibels. A hen, at her loudest, is only as loud as human conversation. It would be like hearing your neighbors having a conversation in their yard, fifteen feet away from property lines. The only noise complaints regarding chickens were about roosters crowing.

Some people believe that if you have chickens, you will attract predators and rodents. Predators and rodents are already living in Concord. Bird feeders, pet food, gardens, and birdbaths attract animals like foxes, raccoons, rodents, and skunks. Chickens can solve part of that problem by eating small rodents.

Chickens also help stop pollution. Think about it: If you have rotting food, you're probably going to throw it in the trash. That trash then goes to a landfill and pollutes. But chickens will happily devour your spoiled food, giving you fresh eggs and fertilizer in return.

Fresh eggs are a great source of protein and vitamins. Not only that, they promote brain development and eye health. With more people being able to have chickens, that means more people being more healthy.

Chickens are incredibly easy to train, too. They can learn everything from fetch to how to play the piano. Some kids have a little bit of free time. Training a chicken is not only fun but rewarding, too.

When I had chickens, I loved them. They loved being handled and never harmed us. I think many more people (kids and adults) would benefit from and enjoy keeping chickens, and I hope you put some weight on that.

Thank you to the city councilors who took the time to talk to me on the phone. I have had a great experience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Francesca Brown

