

U.S. Senate Committee Urges Enforcement of Animal Cruelty Laws

Powerful Senate committee directs the Department of Justice to make enforcement of animal welfare laws a priority

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, October 2, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations included language in a key spending bill directing the Department of Justice to make investigation and prosecution of our nation's federal animal welfare laws a priority, including the animal fighting laws, Crush Video law, and Horse Protection Act. The committee rightfully noted the well-documented link between animal cruelty and violent crimes and drug trafficking. The Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, which has authority over funding for DOJ, is led U.S. Senator Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Sen. Jeanne Shaheen.



Cockfighting Match

“

Our anti-cruelty laws must be backed up with vigorous enforcement.”

Holly Gann, director of federal affairs at Animal Wellness Action

“Our anti-cruelty laws must be backed up with vigorous enforcement,” said Holly Gann, director of federal affairs at Animal Wellness Action and the Animal Wellness Foundation. “We are glad to see such a strong statement from the U.S. Senate, and we encourage the Department of Justice to establish an Animal Cruelty Crimes unit to focus on rooting out vicious crimes against animals.”

Earlier this year, the U.S. House adopted a similar amendment, by a vote of 381-50, to direct DOJ to use \$2

million to enforce animal welfare laws. The amendment was sponsored by U.S. Reps. Haley Stevens (D-MI), Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Joe Neguse (D-CO), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Ben McAdams (D-UT), Peter King (R-NY), Madeleine Dean (D-PA), Vern Buchanan (R-FL), and Cindy Axne (D-IA). The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, led by Chairman Jose Serrano (D-NY), also included language emphasizing the importance of prosecuting federal animal welfare crimes, an effort championed by Rep. Charlie Crist (D-FL).

U.S. Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ), John Kennedy (R-LA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Tom Tillis (R-NC), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and Susan Collins (R-ME) have also called on DOJ to make enforcement of animal cruelty crimes a priority and [sent a letter to DOJ in June](#).

The Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act, which would establish the first federal animal cruelty law prohibiting malicious abuse, is one of the laws that would be enforced by the

DOJ once enacted. That bill recently reached 290 cosponsors in the House, triggering an opportunity for a floor vote under new House rules.

Animal Wellness Action and the Animal Wellness Foundation are taking the lead on animal protection enforcement. The organizations also formed the [Animal Wellness Law Enforcement Council](#), comprised of Attorneys General and prosecutors across the nation, earlier this year.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.



Example of soring that enforcement of the Horse Protection Act would prevent

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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