

Animal Wellness Action Executive Director Marty Irby Named one of The Hill's Top Lobbyists for 2021

A Native of Mobile, Alabama, Irby was also named by The Hill in 2019, 2020 and Honored by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, II for His Work to Protect Horses

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 1, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, one of Washington D.C.'s major political daily publications, [The Hill](#), released its [annual list of Top Lobbyists for 2021](#) and among those recognized was [Animal Wellness Action](#) executive director [Marty Irby](#). Irby was also named as one of The Hill's Top Lobbyists for 2019, and 2020.



Marty Irby, one of The Hill's Top Lobbyists for 2021

Irby, a lifelong horseman, and native of Mobile, Ala., was recognized for his work advancing legislation to protect American equines, companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife, and was honored in 2020 by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, II for his work to protect American horses from cruelty.

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Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action

“I’m deeply honored to have been named as one of the top lobbyists in the nation for the third year in a row and am truly grateful for the tireless work that our supporters and my colleagues have dedicated to achieve tangible progress for animals,” said Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action. “While 2021 has been a very challenging, proximity to Capitol Hill and work ethic are the key

ingredients for any successful lobbyist, and I offer my deepest gratitude to The Hill for this honor.”

“Marty Irby is a tireless, strategic advocate on Capitol Hill, working easily with Republicans and

Democrats to get practical things accomplished during a time when the media focuses so much on our political divisions,” said Wayne Pacelle, president at Animal Wellness Action and a long-time colleague of Irby. “We are proud of Marty for representing not only Alabama so well in Washington, D.C., but the noble cause of defending animals from so many forms of cruelty.”

“Marty has a unique ability to bring unlikely allies together for a common purpose,” said Mike Eby executive director of the Organization for Competitive Markets. “Our work with both farmers and advocates to reform the mandatory USDA Commodity Checkoff Programs and pass the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming Act is one such example. Working with a wide array of legislators and stakeholders on both sides of the aisle has been a key factor in Marty’s success.”

Irby and the rest of Animal Wellness Action’s lobbying team worked in December of 2020 and in 2021 to help secure the following victories for animals:

- Enactment of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety (HISA) Act, H.R. 1754/S. 4547, the first new federal

horse protection law in half a century achieved by working with industry partners such as The Jockey Club, the New York Racing Association, The Breeders’ Cup, and the Water, Hay, Oats Alliance. The measure, led by Reps. Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., and Andy Barr, R-Ky., and Sens. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., was signed into law in December of 2020, and banned race-day doping in the sport while also creating a uniform national standard for drug testing and regulations in the U.S.



Rep. Nancy Mace, R-S.C., Carole Baskin, and Marty Irby in 2021



Marty Irby, U.S. Sens. John Kennedy, R-La., Rand Paul, R-Ky., Mike Braun, R-Ind., and others at a press conference in 2021 on the introduction of the FDA Modernization Act

- Enactment of the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers (PAWS) for Veterans Therapy Act, H.R. 1448, signed into law in August of 2021, led by former U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers, R-Ohio, and Rep. Kathleen Rice, D-N.Y. in the House and Sens. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., and Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz. in the Senate.

- Passage of an amendment led by Reps. Troy Carter, D-La., John Katko, R-N.Y., and Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., to the INVEST Act, through the U.S. House, that would ban the transportation of equines across state and federal lines for the purposes of slaughter. Irby conceived the measure, and secured the support of more than 230 groups, organizations, rescues, and equine-related businesses within a matter of days.

- Passage of a \$3 million Appropriations Amendment through the U.S. House, that Irby conceived to help fund and upgrade the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) canine import inspection process. The measure, led by Reps. Kathleen Rice, D-N.Y., Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., and Kurt Schrader, D-Oregon, garnered the bipartisan support of more than a dozen cosponsors.

- Record breaking funding in both House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations bills to better enforce the Horse Protection Act of 1970 (HPA) a very high priority Irby worked with leaders in the Tennessee Walking Horse industry to secure: \$3,040,000 in funding in the House spending bill and \$2,400,000 in the Senate version. The effort was led by Reps. Kurt Schrader, D-Oregon, Hal Rogers, R-Ky., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., and John Rose, R-Tenn. in the House, and Sens. Mike Crapo, R-Ida., Mark Warner, D-Va., Richard Shelby, R-Ala., and Bill Hagerty, R-Tenn. in the Senate.

- Passage of the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act, H.R. 2811/S. 1106 through the U.S. Senate, led



AWA executive director Marty Irby testifying at a House hearing on H.R. 1754 in January 2020



Marty Irby and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

by Del. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, D-MP-At Large, and Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Tex., as well as Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., and Shelley Moore-Capito, R-W.V. attached to a larger package of bills.

- As a follow-up to the House-passed CDC funding amendment on the canine import suspension, Irby and others in their coalition initiated and secured a House letter to the CDC led by Reps. Ted Deutch, D-Fla., and Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., and signed by 57 House Members (35 Democrats and 22 Republicans) calling on CDC to lift their ban on canine imports from 113 countries.

- A letter to the U.S. Postal Service Inspector (USPSI) led by Reps. Mike Quigley, D-Ill., and Nancy Mace, R-S.C. calling on the USPSI to crackdown against illegal gamecock shipments through the U.S. Mail. The letter was signed by 36 Members of the House including 24 Democrats and 12 Republicans.

- A letter from House Natural Resources Subcommittee Chairman Joe Neguse, D-Colo. signed by Reps. Madeline Dean, D-Pa., Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., and Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Deputy Director of the National Park Service Shawn Benge addressing concerns about the lethal removal of bison from Grand Canyon National Park.

- Animal Wellness Action has also worked to introduce a raft of new legislation, expanding the animal welfare agenda at the national level. New bills that the organization has initiated and championed in the 116th and 117th Congresses are the FDA Modernization Act, H.R. 2565/S. 2952 led by Reps. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., Elaine Luria, D-Va., and Nancy Mace, R-S.C., and Sens. Rand Paul, R-Ky., Cory Booker, D-N.J., Mike Braun, R-Ind., John Kennedy, R-La., and Ben Ray Lujan, D-N.M.; the Minks in Narrowly Kept Spaces are Superspreaders (MINKS) Act, H.R. 4310, introduced by House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., and Rep. Nancy Mace, R-S.C.; the Bear Protection Act, led by Kennedy and Booker in the Senate and Reps. Ted Lieu, D-Cal., and Rodney Davis, R-Ill. to stop the trade in bear bile; the Animal Cruelty Enforcement Act, led by Reps. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., and David Joyce, R-Ohio to create an Animal Cruelty Crimes section at the Dept. of Justice; and the Greyhound Protection Act led by Reps. Tony Cardenas, D-Cal., and Michael Waltz, R-Fla., to ban greyhound racing in the United States.

As COVID-19 continues to hamper in person events, meetings, and fly-ins, to D.C., Irby, who also serves on the board of directors of the Organization for Competitive Markets (OCM), coordinated and led one of the first fly-ins to Washington in June, 2021 to advocate in person with farmers and ranchers from South Dakota, Alabama, Mississippi, Nebraska, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Washington, and Wyoming for the reform of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Commodity Checkoff Programs, the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act led by Reps. Dina Titus, D-Nev., Nancy Mace, R-S.C., and Sens. Mike Lee, R-Utah, Cory Booker, D-N.Y., Rand Paul, R-Ky., Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., as well as other sustainable agriculture issues.

Animal Wellness 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.

Marty Irby

Animal Wellness Action

+1 202-821-5686

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