

Shooting in Dallas Is Latest Evidence that Cockfighting and Dogfighting Are Deeply Entangled with Serious Crimes

*A Statement from Wayne Pacelle,
president, Animal Wellness Action*

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, UNITED STATES, April 4, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, [Animal Wellness Action](#), which issues rewards to tipsters whose information leads to the arrest of illegal cockfighters and dogfighters, reacted to the news of a shooting at an illegal cockfight in Dallas. Northeast Texas and southeast Oklahoma have been hotbeds of illegal cockfighting.

Here is the statement from Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action:



Cockfighting, violent on its own, brings other crimes to organized events.

"Cockfighting is bound up with other crimes, such as illegal gambling, money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and even attempted homicide, as we tragically saw with a shooting at a cockfight in Dallas over the weekend. Cockfighting is the very definition of barbarism and lawlessness. Responsible law enforcement officers enforce our state and federal felony laws against animal fighting, but those lawmen who look the other way when these crimes occur, they put their communities at risk and betray their oath to uphold the law without fear or favor."

Texas has long treated cockfighting and dogfighting as felonies. Oklahoma voters handily approved a cockfighting ban 21 years ago, imposing penalties on violators that are identical to those for dogfighting. SB 2530, from Rep. Humphrey, R-Lane, provides a pathway for counties to opt out of the strong penalties in the law — "a practical decriminalization of cockfighting" that will allow fighting enclaves.

"It makes sense that people breaking the law want to plead with lawmakers to roll back penalties for their crimes. But the cockfighters haven't said a word that the penalties in the anti-cockfighting law are identical to the penalties imposed under the anti-dogfighting statute. Consistency is also not the strong suit of people who commit violent crimes," added Pacelle.



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*Wayne Pacelle, Animal
Wellness Action*

Earlier this year, the Center for a Humane Economy released a [comprehensive 63-page report](#) on the links between cockfighting and avian influenza and virulent Newcastle Disease. There have been 15 introductions of vND into the United States since 1950, 10 of which occurred via the illegal smuggling of game cocks across our southern border from Mexico. (Virulent Newcastle disease is endemic in Mexico and all of Latin America.) Just three of those outbreaks cost the federal government more than \$1 billion.

Animal Wellness Action and the [Animal Wellness](#)

[Foundation](#) provide a \$5,000 reward to citizens for information resulting in the successful prosecution of any individual for violating state or federal law (7 U.S.C. § 2156) against animal fighting. They can send tips to animalcrueltytips@animalwellnessaction.org.

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