

Memphis Seizure of Birds, Dog Reveals Extent of Animal Fighting, Need to Eradicate It

Cockfighting and dogfighting are sinister subcultures in too many communities and show the need for Congress to pass the FIGHT Act

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES, January 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Animal Wellness Action is reacting to news that Memphis (Tenn.) Police Department has executed a large-scale animal seizure with apparent ties to animal fighting.

Officers confiscated 135 roosters and hens and an injured dog believed to have been used for fighting purposes.

One man was arrested in the raid, which occurred Monday, Jan. 8, in the Nutbush area.



Cockfighting Match

According to a story published by WREG and distributed nationally by Yahoo! News: "Police said most of the birds were roosters and hens and were being kept in cramped and feces-covered cages behind a duplex in the 4000 block of Bayliss. They said the animals also had inadequate shelter from the elements."

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Wayne Pacelle, Animal Wellness Action

The news report added that, "Police said some of the game cocks had their combs cut along with their spurs cut in half. They said the cuts are consistent with those used in cock fighting. Officers said they also found a dog chained up in the backyard that had injuries consistent with dog

fighting."

The dog and 85 of the birds are being cared for by Memphis Animal Services, which the report indicates may have insufficient resources to handle the new animals.

“Animal fighting is an ongoing problem not just in Memphis but in many areas of Tennessee,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action. “The state must finally make cockfighting a felony, partly because the weak penalties now provided in the law are not a sufficient deterrent to the people involved in staging combat between animals.”

In addition to the abject animal cruelty involved when roosters and dogs are forced to fight one another, the illegal activity poses threats to humans.

- **DISEASE.** Animal Wellness Action and the Center released a [comprehensive 62-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 gamecocks across the 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 close to \$1 billion.
- **ASSOCIATED CRIME.** Animal fights are drenched in other criminal activities, including the trafficking of illicit substances, prostitution, wagering and sometimes murder. Animal Wellness Action has offered a reward related to two execution-style killings at a Mississippi cockfight in November, and six people were killed just this week at a cockfight in Guerrero, Mexico.

The [FIGHT Act](#) Must Pass

Mr. Pacelle also called on the Tennessee federal Congressional delegation to support efforts to strengthen the federal law against animal fighting. The FIGHT Act (Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-Risk Trafficking) would enhance the enforcement opportunities by banning simulcasting and gambling of animal fighting ventures; halting the shipment of mature roosters (chickens only) shipped through the U.S. mail (it is already illegal to ship dogs through the mail); creating a citizen suit provision, after proper notice to federal authorities, to allow private right of action against illegal animal fighters; and enhancing forfeiture provisions to include real property for animal fighting crimes. [Read more here.](#)

U.S. Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., and John Kennedy, R-La., are the lead authors of S. 1529, and by U.S. Reps. Don Bacon, R-Neb., and Andrea Salinas, D-Ore., are the authors of H.R. 2742.

ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. X: @AWAction_News.

The Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social

responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both. The Center believes helping animals helps us all. X: @TheHumaneCenter.

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