

Dogfighting Ring Exposed in Monmouth County – Animal Advocates Call on Congress to Pass Senator Booker’s FIGHT Act

Sen. Cory Booker and Reps. Gottheimer, Kean, Pascrell, Smith, and Van Drew want more enforcement capacity to cut down on dogfighting and cockfighting rings

NEPTUNE TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES, February 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As details emerged of a dogfighting ring discovered over the weekend in Monmouth County, Wayne Pacelle of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy said that key members of New Jersey’s Congressional delegation have been at work for months on a plan to address rampant dogfighting and cockfighting in New Jersey and throughout the nation.



The FIGHT Act will give law enforcement more tools to squeeze dogfighters and cockfighters and end their cruelty.

The Monmouth case of cruelty to animals is just the latest of dozens of major animal fighting rings uncovered throughout the nation, collectively indicating the ubiquity of illegal dogfighting and cockfighting operations and the need for a new plan to wipe them out before harm results.

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Wayne Pacelle, President of Animal Wellness Action

Pacelle, president of the two national animal welfare groups, said U.S. Senator Cory Booker, D-N.J., already has a plan in place to address this issue and that the Congress should adopt his legislation, co-authored by U.S. Senator John Kennedy, R-La., to provide enhanced law enforcement capacity to crack down on dogfighting and cockfighting. Reps. Josh Gottheimer, D-N.J.-5; Tom Kean, R-N.J.-7; Bill

Pascrell, D-N.J.-9; Chris Smith, R-N.J.-4; and Jeff Van Drew, R-N.J.-2, are cosponsors of the

companion measure in the U.S. House.

Senator Booker introduced the Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-Risk Trafficking (FIGHT) Act, S. 1529, in May 2023, and his bipartisan bill with Senator Kennedy has 15 cosponsors. H.R. 2742, the House companion bill, was introduced in April 2023 by Reps. Don Bacon, R-Neb., and Andrea Salinas, D-Ore. With five New Jersey Representatives among them, it now has more than 100 cosponsors.

“Animal fighting is rampant, and we should never accept this level of violence and other vice in our communities,” Pacelle said. “Senator Booker and nearly half a dozen other New Jersey lawmakers have a plan to wipe out this grisly enterprise and make animals and people safer in the Garden State and all other parts of the nation. Congress should not delay another month before acting on [the FIGHT Act](#).”

A local humane group and Neptune Township Police responded to an anonymous tip about dogs in distress. When the officials arrived, they followed a trail of fresh blood to a backyard garage, where they found six dogs confined in separate crates, surrounded by squalid conditions. [According to a local news story](#), “The animals bore signs of brutal treatment, with scabs, scars, and puncture wounds indicating their involvement in illegal dog fighting activities.”

Also according to the story, “Among the confiscated items were syringes, IV bags, and suspected animal steroids, alongside two dog treadmills—tools commonly used in the despicable trade of dog fighting.”

No animal-fighting charges have been filed, though one occupant of the residence was arrested for disorderly behavior. While Pacelle applauded the swift action of the Monmouth County SPCA Humane Law Enforcement and the Neptune Township Police, he encouraged local prosecutors to bring swift, maximum charges against the abusers.

“That anyone would treat dogs in such a remorseless manner and subject them to death matches for the amusement of the handlers and spectators shocks the conscience,” Pacelle said.

“I consider passing the FIGHT Act in Congress as urgent a priority as we have at Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy,” Pacelle said. “Only stronger laws and better enforcement of them will help prevent cruelty to animals like authorities discovered in Monmouth County.”

The bill has more than 450 endorsing agencies and organizations, including 200 law enforcement agencies. It would strengthen existing federal law against dogfighting and cockfighting by allowing a private right of action against dogfighters and cockfighting, banning on-line gambling on animal fights, allowing for criminal forfeiture of equipment and properties used in the commission of these crimes, and enhancing prohibitions on shipping fighting

roosters through the U.S. mail. Animal Wellness Action has discovered that cockfighters annually send tens of thousands of live roosters for cockfights in boxes through the U.S. mail.

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 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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