

Massive Cockfighting Bust in Galloway Township Shows Need for Better Law, Tougher Enforcement

52 arrests, 50 roosters found (some in bags), dogs in inhumane conditions seized along with \$37K cash

GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES, March 11, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In the wake of a massive bust on area cockfighters, Wayne Pacelle of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy is calling on members of New Jersey's Congressional delegation to double down on their efforts to pass a key piece of legislation called the FIGHT Act. The bill will address rampant dogfighting and cockfighting in New Jersey and throughout the nation.



Cockfighting Match

"We applaud Galloway Township Police officers for immediately recognizing the severity of the crime scene they discovered, with 50 roosters, (some in bags), dogs kept in inhumane conditions, a fighting ring for spectators and tens of thousands of dollars in cash," said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action. "Animal fighting is cruelty to animals that is tied up with many other crimes that are dangerous and deadly to humans."

The Galloway Township 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.

Township police executed a search warrant over the weekend at a property on South Bremen Avenue. Fifty-two people were arrested and more than \$37,000 in cash was seized. About 50 roosters were discovered in various health conditions, some in bags, as well as four dogs were found "living in inhumane conditions in an outdoor shed" and turned over to animal control. Jose Madera, the owner of the home, was arrested and charged with numerous animal cruelty offenses, possession of a controlled dangerous substance, destruction of evidence, and resisting



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*Wayne Pacelle, President of
Animal Wellness Action*

arrest.

Wayne Pacelle, president Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy, 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.

Sen. 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.

“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 recently discovered.”

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:

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