

# Cockfighting Bust with 271 Birds in Pima County Highlights Need for FIGHT Act

*Arizona Sheriffs' Association supports the FIGHT Act to step up enforcement and end barbaric, crime-infested fighting operations*

PIMA COUNTY, AZ, UNITED STATES, December 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy, applauded the work of Pima County sheriff's deputies for identifying and immediately busting a large-scale cockfighting operation they discovered when responding to an unrelated call.



Cockfighting, bloody enough already, often entails the use of sharp, mechanical accoutrements to increase carnage.

A total of 271 fighting roosters and four dogs were seized at a home near South Country Club Road after a report of a utility service theft. Deputies noticed hundreds of fighting roosters.

“An operation with 271 birds is a serious fighting setting, and we applaud Pima County Sheriff’s deputies for their keen policing instincts in sniffing out this criminal enterprise and then shuttering it,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action, which is leading a national campaign against staged animal fighting. “Animal fighting is organized crime linked to illegal weapons and gambling, money laundering and drug trafficking and undermines the safety of our communities.”

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The FIGHT Act will significantly bolster our collective efforts to eradicate brutal animal cruelty and associated crimes.”

*David Rhodes, Yavapai County Sheriff*

Arizona voters outlawed cockfighting in a 1998 ballot measure, which Mr. Pacelle helped to lead with Tucson

citizen Jamie Massey.

The current political fight is over the federal Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-risk Trafficking (FIGHT) Act.

“Arizona is a strong leader in law and order,” writes association president David Rhodes, Yavapai County Sheriff, in a September 2024 [endorsement letter](#). The FIGHT Act will “significantly bolster our collective efforts to eradicate brutal animal cruelty and associated crimes.”

Arizona joins sheriffs' associations in Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Texas along with the National Sheriffs' Association and the National District Attorneys Association, to endorse the FIGHT Act.

The FIGHT Act would enhance enforcement of these laws by banning online gambling on animal fights; halting the shipment of mature roosters (chickens only) through the U.S. Postal Service (it is already illegal to ship dogs through the mail); allowing a civil right of action for private citizens against animal fighters after proper notice to federal authorities; and enhancing criminal forfeiture penalties to include real property for those convicted of animal fighting crimes.

“Cockfighting is a crime of violence, and it is bound up with other crimes, including border crimes like illegal trafficking of animals and narcotics,” added Pacelle. “We have a long way to go before these crime networks are dismantled, and the FIGHT Act provides the tools to do exactly that.”

U.S. Representatives Juan Ciscomani, R-6; David Schweikert, R-1; and Greg Stanton, D-4 are the cosponsors of the FIGHT Act from Arizona.

#### 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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