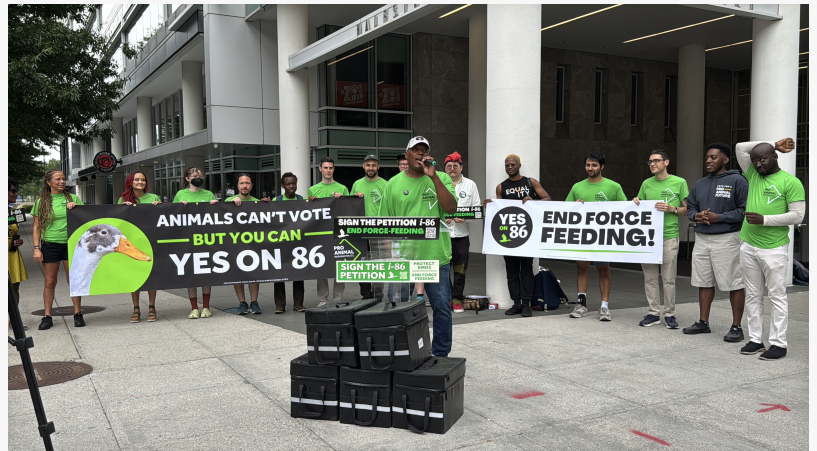


DC Voters Will Decide Force Fed Foie Gras Prohibition November

Initiative 86 qualifies for the November ballot with over 46,000 signatures — the second-most of any ballot initiative in DC history.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The DC Board of Elections announced Wednesday that [Initiative 86](#) has officially qualified for the November 3, 2026 General Election ballot. If approved by voters, the measure would prohibit the sale of foie gras produced through force-feeding in the District, with the law taking effect July 1, 2027.



Animal advocates gathered in front of the D.C. Board of Elections after turning in signatures for Initiative 86, Prohibiting the force feeding of birds act of 2026

The campaign behind the measure, Pro-Animal DC, fielded 198 petition circulators who collected more than 46,000 signatures over 14 weeks. To qualify, the initiative needed 23,803 valid signatures — five percent of the District's registered voters — and had to meet that threshold in at least five of the city's eight wards. Pro-Animal DC cleared the bar in six of eight wards, and the Board of Elections certified Wednesday that the petition contained sufficient valid signatures.

“

How we treat animals reflects how we treat everyone in our society. I truly believe that we can end the sale of force-fed foie gras here in DC and eventually end this cruel industry in the entire US.”

*Cady Witt, Campaign Director,
Pro-Animal DC*

“We turned in the second most signatures of any ballot initiative behind marijuana in DC history,” said Oye Owolewa, DC Shadow Representative and the current DC Democratic Party candidate for at-large councilmember. “DC residents want a cruelty-free district, making sure that

their values align with where they eat.”

DC is the third-highest foie gras consuming city in the U.S., behind New York City and Las Vegas,

according to a recent report. The product is controversial because it relies on force-feeding ducks and geese until they develop liver disease. A survey of 438 registered DC voters found [78% support](#) for the measure across all eight wards.

“They force-feed ducks and geese until they get liver disease. It makes it hard for them to breathe and hard for them to walk,” said George Cooper, a volunteer circulator with Pro-Animal DC. “It’s probably one of the cruelest parts of our food system that is still legal in the United States. It has already been outlawed in New York City, California, Portland, Pittsburgh, and I’m very excited to get it on the ballot here in DC”

With Initiative 86’s certification, DC joins a growing list of jurisdictions confronting the practice. Denver, Colorado will vote on a similar initiative this November, and Portland, Oregon passed a similar bill in June.

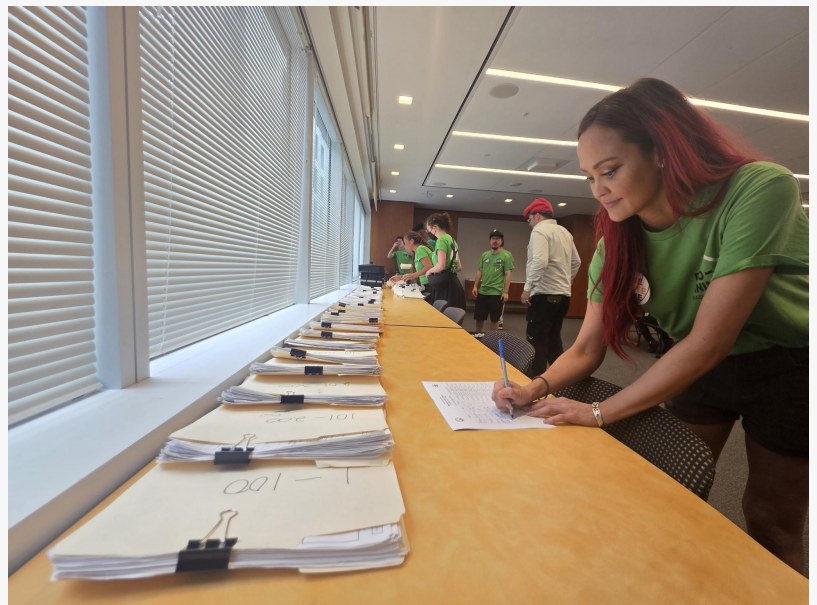
The signature drive drew support from local elected officials, including DC Ward 8 Commissioner Salim Adofo, who personally collected 191 signatures. “I want to say thank you to Pro-Animal DC. I want to say thank you to everybody who went out in the hot sun and got signatures, everybody who was out in the rain, everybody who was at the farmers’ markets,” Adofo said. “This is a true representation of what democracy looks like.”

“How we treat animals reflects how we treat everyone in our society, and I truly believe that we can end the sale of force-fed foie gras here in DC and eventually end this cruel industry in the entire United States,” said Cady Witt, Campaign Director of Pro-Animal DC. “There are only two large foie gras factory farms left in the U.S. that force-feed birds and if we work together, I believe we can shut them down.”

Pro-Animal DC is the campaign committee behind Initiative 86 and is a grassroots movement of



Volunteers gather signatures to prohibit force-fed foie gras in DC



Cady Witt, the proposer of Initiative 86, turns in signatures at the Board of Elections.

voters, volunteers, and donors dedicated to passing laws that reflect DC's values of compassion and humane treatment of animals.

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