

HUMANE ACTIVIST

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The Humane Society Legislative Fund is a social welfare organization incorporated under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code and formed in 2004 as a separate lobbying affiliate of the Humane Society of the United States. HSLF works to pass animal protection laws at the state and federal levels, to educate the public about animal protection issues and to support humane candidates for office. On the web at hslf.org.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear friends,

We're in the midst of one of the most important fights for animals we've faced in decades.

On August 12, the Trump administration announced new regulations that dramatically weaken the Endangered Species Act. These regulatory changes allow the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to block conservation measures vital to protecting our nation's most vulnerable species and their habitats.

Under the changes, regulators can now consider possible economic impacts when deciding whether to list a species for protection, instead of basing

such determinations solely on science. Newly listed threatened species are stripped of automatic protection under the new rules. Politically appointed officials will have more flexibility in removing species from the law's protection.

Particularly maddening, the finalized rules give states and local governments substantial power over managing species that would otherwise be protected by the ESA. That's a problem since a number of states don't prioritize wildlife protection, as we saw when gray wolves and grizzly bears lost ESA protections in Wyoming and the state promptly declared trophy hunting seasons on the animals.

Clearly, the Trump administration made these changes as a gift to industry interests, even while the vast majority of ordinary Americans strongly support the ESA. Over 800,000 comments were submitted in opposition to these changes earlier this year.

Of course, humane lawmakers along with environmental and animal protection groups like HSLF have no intention of accepting these regulatory changes without a fight. On September 25, 17 states, the District of Columbia and New York City filed a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's weakening of the ESA. A month earlier, environmental and animal protection groups, including the Humane Society of the United States, filed a similar suit.

At HSLF, we're lobbying members of Congress to co-sponsor the Protect America's Wildlife and Fish in Need of Conservation (PAW and FIN) Act (H.R. 4348/S. 2491), introduced by Rep. Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz., and Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M. If passed, the legislation would reverse these damaging rollbacks to the ESA.

HSLF also endorses the Supporting Activities and Leadership Abroad to Move Amphibians Nearing Decline or Extinction to Recovery (SALAMANDER) Act (H.R. 4340) and the Critically Endangered Animals Conservation Act (H.R. 4341). These measures would authorize vital funding for species whose populations are in dangerous decline.

We're doing everything we can to ensure our most vulnerable animals don't disappear forever because of the greed of a few.

Sincerely,

Sara Amundson
President

Humane Society Legislative Fund



An EPA directive could spare tens of thousands of animals from the horrors of testing.

A victory on testing

EPA PLEDGES TO ELIMINATE TESTING ON MAMMALS

WE WON this battle little by little.

In a watershed moment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler signed a directive on September 10 for the agency to stop using mammals in chemical and pesticide tests by 2035.

The triumph came after animal protection advocates spent decades in the trenches, educating the public and leaders on Capitol Hill about the horrors of animal testing—which is not only cruel to test subjects, whether mice or rabbits or dogs, but also woefully ineffective at predicting the impact of chemicals on human health.

“Everything we’ve done from a science and policy perspective has been working toward this opportunity,” HSLF President Sara Amundson says of the EPA’s bold move.

Since launching her animal protection career in 1988, Amundson has tirelessly urged members of Congress to reduce the use of animals in toxicity tests, encouraging them to increase appropriations for nonanimal alternative technologies like cell cultures and computer modeling, which are more efficient, more predictive and cheaper than animal tests. It was fitting then that at the press conference about the directive, Wheeler invited Amundson to be by his side.

Nearly two decades ago, Amundson and other HSLF leaders began lobbying to amend the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act with language that would reduce the use of animals in toxicity testing in favor of modern science-based alternatives. Then-President Obama signed that amendment, the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, into law in June 2016. The law has since saved thousands of animals from having harsh chemicals rubbed into their skin, forced down their throats and dripped in their eyes. It also laid the groundwork for the EPA’s historic directive.

“This is not an animal protection issue that you can drop in and out of,” Amundson says of

animal testing. “Everything that you do builds on the next step.”

In a memo about the directive, Wheeler explained the EPA will begin with reducing its reliance on mammal tests, cutting the funding for that kind of research by 30% by 2025. The policy change also directs the agency to stop using results from mammal studies for approval of new chemicals, which will spare tens of thousands of animals. Companies seeking approval for a new chemical will be required to seek the consent of the EPA to carry out animal tests.

“The Dow Chemicals of the world will be making changes in terms of the way that they do business with the EPA,” Amundson says.

Amundson got to know Wheeler nearly 20 years ago when he served on the staff of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. She quickly learned of his long-time disdain for animal testing. At the press conference, Wheeler handed out copies of an op-ed he wrote about the subject as a college student. “He’s been working with us on these reforms for literally decades,” she says.

In Amundson’s mind, placing a deadline for eliminating the tests was a courageous step. “All of the really big scientific advancements have been based on a willingness to step up and be declarative,” she says, “whether that means setting out to map the human genome or putting an end to mammalian testing.”



Congressional staffers learn about rabbit care and humane cosmetics while playing with adoptable rabbits at an event hosted by Rep. Tony Cárdenas and HSLF (see p. 8).

LEGISLATIVE LINEUP

THE FOLLOWING is a sampling of HSLF-supported animal protection bills before the U.S. Congress. It's vital that you call, email or write your federal legislators to let them know your views on these bills. To find out who your legislators are and how to reach them directly, go to hslf.org/leglookup or call 202-676-2314.

When you call a legislator's office, ask to speak with the staff person handling animal protection issues. Give the bill number and the name of the bill or issue. Be polite, brief and to the point. If you plan to visit

Washington, D.C., make an appointment to meet with your legislators or their staff to discuss animal issues. We can help you with background information and may be able to accompany you on your visits.

Please note: Due to security procedures on Capitol Hill, regular mail to members of Congress may be significantly delayed. Telephone calls and emails are the best ways to contact your legislators about pending bills.

For the latest information about all animal protection bills, visit legislation.hslf.org.

Equines



Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act
H.R. 693 / S. 1007

To amend the Horse Protection Act to end the failed system of industry self-policing and use of devices integral to soring, and to establish felony penalties for this cruel practice. Sponsors: Reps. Schrader, D-Ore.; Yoho, R-Fla.; Cohen, D-Tenn.; Estes, R-Kan.; Schakowsky, D-Ill. / Sens. Crapo, R-Idaho; Warner, D-Va. (Passed the House in July by a 333-96 vote.)

Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act
H.R. 961

To ban domestic horse slaughter, stop the export of horses for slaughter abroad and prevent health threats posed by meat from horses raised in the U.S. and given drugs unsafe for humans. Sponsors: Reps. Schakowsky, D-Ill.; Buchanan, R-Fla.



John Stringer Rainey Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act
S. 2006

To amend Title 18 of the U.S. Code to make it illegal for anyone to knowingly transport, purchase, sell, possess, ship or receive any horse with the intent of slaughtering the animal for human consumption, and codify penalties, including fines and imprisonment, for individuals who violate the law. Sponsors: Sens. Menendez, D-N.J.; Graham, R-S.C.; Whitehouse, D-R.I.; Collins, R-Maine

Horseracing Integrity Act
H.R. 1754 / S. 1820

To end doping of all race horses, including same-day drugging, by putting a new nonprofit headed by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency in charge of setting national uniform rules, testing standards and enforcement processes for medication use in horse racing. Sponsors: Reps. Tonko, D-N.Y.; Barr, R-Ky. / Sens. Gillibrand, D-N.Y.; McCally, R-Ariz.

Disaster Preparedness



Providing Responsible Emergency Plans for Animals at Risk of Emerging Disasters (PREPARED) Act
H.R. 1042

To require facilities regulated under the Animal Welfare Act, such as puppy mills, zoos and laboratories, to submit annual contingency plans to care for their animals during natural disasters, power outages, animal escapes and other emergencies. Sponsors: Reps. Titus, D-Nev.; King, R-N.Y.

Wildlife



Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act
H.R. 737 / S. 877

To prohibit possession, sale or purchase of shark fins or any product containing shark fins, and to establish penalties for violations. Sponsors: Reps. Sablan, D-N. Marianas; McCaul, R-Texas / Sens. Booker, D-N.J.; Capito, R-W.Va. (Approved by Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee in April. Approved by House Natural Resources Committee in September.)



Conserving Ecosystems by Ceasing the Importation of Large Animal Trophies (CECIL) Act
H.R. 2245

To ban imports of trophies and parts from African lions and elephants from major hunting destinations in Africa into the U.S. and abolish the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's International Wildlife Conservation Council, which promotes international trophy hunting. Sponsor: Rep. Grijalva, D-Ariz. (Approved by House Natural Resources Committee in September.)

Big Cat Public Safety Act
H.R. 1380 / S. 2561

To prohibit the possession of big cat species such as tigers and lions by individuals as pets or by poorly run animal exhibitors that allow public contact or photo-ops with these animals. Sponsors: Reps. Quigley, D-Ill.; Fitzpatrick, R-Pa. / Sen. Blumenthal, D-Conn. (Approved by House Natural Resources Committee in September.)



Rescuing Animals With Rewards (RAWR) Act
H.R. 97 / S. 1590

To authorize rewards through the Department of State's Transnational Organized Crime Rewards Program to persons who disclose original information concerning transnational wildlife crime that results in a successful enforcement action. Sponsors: Reps. Buchanan, R-Fla.; Titus, D-Nev. / Sens. Merkley, D-Ore.; Collins, R-Maine. (Passed the House in July and the Senate in October.)

Scientific Assistance for Very Endangered (SAVE) North Atlantic Right Whales Act
H.R. 1568 / S. 2453

To authorize funding for North Atlantic right whale conservation programs and projects, including the development and implementation of advanced technology to prevent entanglement with fishing gear. Sponsors: Reps. Moulton, D-Mass.; Rutherford, R-Fla. / Sens. Booker, D-N.J.; Isakson, R-Ga.

Pets and Cruelty



Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act
H.R. 724 / S. 479

To prohibit extreme acts of animal cruelty when they occur on federal property or in interstate or foreign commerce. Sponsors: Reps. Deutch, D-Fla.; Buchanan, R-Fla. / Sens. Toomey, R-Pa.; Blumenthal, D-Conn. (Passed the House by a voice vote in October.)

Welfare of Our Friends (WOOF) Act
H.R. 1002

To prohibit commercial dog breeders whose licenses have been revoked from obtaining a new USDA breeding license and to close related loopholes. Sponsors: Reps. Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Crist, D-Fla.; Thompson, R-Pa.; McGovern, D-Mass.

Puppy Protection Act
H.R. 2442

To improve standards of care required of licensed dog breeders by addressing cage stacking, veterinary exams, outdoor access and other provisions. Sponsors: Reps. Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Crist, D-Fla.; Reschenthaler, R-Pa.; McGovern, D-Mass.

MARINE MAMMALS

Scientists approach a young North Atlantic right whale they disentangled from fishing lines.



Defending a species at the brink

HSLF pushes to save North Atlantic right whales

SCIENTISTS NAMED THE WHALE SNAKE EYES for the matching, eye-shaped scars on his head. His scars weren't unusual. Most North Atlantic right whales carry similar marks, proof they survived entanglement in commercial fishing gear.

Tragically, Snake Eyes' luck ran out this year. In August, researchers spotted the whale, believed to be at least 40 years old, in Canada's Gulf of St. Lawrence, entangled in heavy rope used in commercial fishing. Delayed by weather, a rescue team couldn't relocate the whale. His carcass turned up in September off Long Island, New York.

Snake Eyes is one of at least 10 North Atlantic right whales to suffer untimely deaths so far this year. Fewer than 400 of the critically endangered marine mammals are thought to remain. At the current rate of loss, scientists believe the species will be functionally extinct within two decades. "It's heartbreaking," says Keisha Sedlacek, HSLF director of regulatory affairs.

While the outlook seems grim, both Sedlacek and Sharon Young, senior strategist for marine issues for the Humane Society of the United States, hold onto hope. "There are a lot of good people fighting," Young says. "These whales won't die without defenders."

HSLF and the HSUS have been on the front lines of this cause for decades, toiling to reduce deaths of right whales resulting from entanglement and ship strikes. Currently, HSLF leaders are lobbying members of Congress to co-sponsor the Scientific Assistance for Very Endangered (SAVE) North Atlantic Right Whales Act (H.R. 1568/S. 2453) introduced by Reps. Seth Moulton, D-Mass., and John Rutherford, R-Fla., and Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., and Johnny Isakson, R-Ga. If passed, the legislation would authorize \$5 million a year to develop, test and implement advanced technology, like ropeless gear, to prevent entanglement.

In partnership with other organizations, HSLF sent a letter to Congress asking for generous funding in fiscal year 2020 for research to help ensure the right whale's survival. In June, the House approved \$2.5 million in its appropriations bill to help the animals. In September, the Senate Appropriations Committee followed suit with a bill that would provide \$3 million for research and conservation efforts for the species. HSLF hopes the funding will increase support for right whale conservation efforts by addressing needs of the fishing industry for practical, cost-effective solutions.

"It's definitely a hard sell when you're talking about folks whose livelihoods depend on being out on the water," Sedlacek points out. "The new technology allows them to keep fishing; they just need to start using it."

Even the sometimes slow-moving federal government seems to understand the urgency of this situation. In April, the National Marine Fisheries Service announced that the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team, which is made up of scientists, regulators, fishers and conservation leaders, had agreed to a set of conservation measures, including decreasing the number of vertical fishing lines in the water, that could reduce serious injuries and deaths of right whales by 60%. While the Maine Lobstermen's Association later withdrew its support for the plan, an administrator for the federal agency said that will not stop the rulemaking process from moving forward.

In addition to the efforts currently being made by scientists, regulators and animal activists to protect right whales, Young believes other solutions may be on the horizon. "We're an extraordinarily inventive species," she says. "There are ways to solve this."



Fewer than 400 North Atlantic right whales are thought to exist.

Lame enforcement

HSLF AND THE HSUS FILE LAWSUIT OVER SABOTAGED ANTI-SORING RULE

A NUMBER OF INSPECTORS AND VETERINARIANS on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's horse inspection program team have recently quit, transferred or retired, according to a damning investigative piece by *The Washington Post* published August 22.

The employees left, the article suggests, because they opposed a change in agency philosophy, where inspectors are now pushed to “educate” individuals and businesses about federal regulations, instead of enforcing the laws. Several inspectors told the newspaper they felt they could no longer protect Tennessee walking horses from soring—the intentional infliction of pain on the animals’ legs and hooves to gain a competitive edge in the show ring. “We’re definitely concerned enforcement is not strong right now,” says Tracie Letterman, HSLF vice president of legislative affairs.

Knowing that more horses might be suffering under a lax enforcement system added to the urgency of an August lawsuit filed by HSLF and the Humane Society of the United States in federal court against the USDA. It seeks to compel the agency to reinstate a final rule designed to put an end to horse soring.

That rule, finalized and announced by the USDA in the last days of the Obama administration, would eliminate weaknesses in the agency’s Horse Protection Act (HPA) regulations that have allowed unscrupulous trainers to get away with animal cruelty. The rule would prohibit the use of devices integral to the soring process, eliminate the failed system of industry self-policing (which the USDA’s own inspector general found to be fraught with conflicts of interest) and put licensed professionals overseen by the agency in charge of inspections.



Congress passed the Horse Protection Act in 1970 to crack down on horse soring, but lax enforcement has allowed this cruelty to continue.

Before a final rule can be generally enforced, however, it must be printed in the *Federal Register*. HSLF leadership expected the rule to be published in the days before President Trump’s inauguration. It wasn’t.

The Trump administration quickly announced that all unpublished rules would be withdrawn and sent to relevant agencies for review. Without following any of the procedures mandated by law to repeal a duly issued, prescribed and promulgated final rule, agency officials placed the final HPA rule on “inactive” status. “That was one of the worst moments of my career,” Letterman recalls sadly. “A strong important rule was just snatched away.”

Along with taking court action, HSLF continues to lobby the Senate to pass the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act (S. 1007). The identical companion bill in the House (H.R. 693) was approved on July 25 by an overwhelming 333-96 bipartisan vote.

The PAST Act would ban the devices integral to soring and end industry self-policing while also expanding enforcement and strengthening penalties.

Change can’t come soon enough. In late August, Keith Dane, senior adviser on equine protection for the HSUS, attended Celebration, the annual national show for the Tennessee walking horse breed. He saw signs that many of the horses had been victims of soring, which wasn’t surprising given that many of the competitors—and several of the top winners—have a history of violating the HPA.


Indeed, some of them were already slated for lengthy disqualifications due to prior misconduct, but the USDA allowed their suspensions to take effect after the 2019 Celebration—with some even beginning years into the future.


It’s all in keeping with a soft enforcement approach that has allowed this cruelty to persist for decades. For Dane, watching the parade of scofflaws at this year’s Celebration, he was reminded again and again that we need to act fast to reform this industry.

THE EYES HAVE IT



HSLF President Sara Amundson and Rep. Tony Cárdenas get acquainted with adoptable rabbits at the Some Bunny to Love festivity on Capitol Hill.

 Hundreds of Congressional staffers squealed over adorable rabbits available for adoption by local rescue groups Friends of Rabbits and Last Chance Animal Rescue during a bunny awareness festivity on Capitol Hill on Sept. 24. Hosted by **REP. TONY CÁRDENAS**, D-Calif., and HSLF, the super-cute event also offered attendees the opportunity to learn more about the cruelty-free cosmetics industry and the Humane Cosmetics Act, which would prohibit the production and sale of animal-tested cosmetics.

 People eager and happy to pay for their parking blunders? It's hard to fathom, but the **MUNCIE, INDIANA, POLICE DEPARTMENT** witnessed this phenomenon during four days in July, when it allowed violators to pay their parking tickets by donating an equivalent amount of kitty chow or litter to the Muncie Animal Care and Services shelter. The wildly successful campaign ended with a room bursting full of cat supplies, donated mostly by folks who didn't even have parking tickets. The idea stemmed from a visit to the shelter by a pair of officers who saw it needed supplies to care for over 350 cats and kittens.



SEN. JEFF MERKLEY, D-Ore., isn't mincing words when it comes to the dangers facing our world's wildlife. Merkley is a lead sponsor of the bipartisan Rescuing Animals with Rewards (RAWR) Act to crack down on wildlife trafficking. "When the world loses these magnificent animals, we all lose a piece of our humanity and our shared history on this planet," Merkley said in a statement about the bill passing out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Sept. 26 (it passed the Senate on Oct. 22; the companion bill passed the House on July 15). "The next generation shouldn't be left just seeing these magnificent animals in pictures in a book, from before poachers, traffickers, and profiteers killed them all off."



REP. RAÚL GRIJALVA, D-Ariz., led the House Natural Resources Committee, which he chairs, to approve four crucial pieces of animal protection legislation in September. They include the Big Cat Public Safety Act, Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act, Conserving Ecosystems by Ceasing the Importation of Large Animal Trophies (CECIL) Act and the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act, which raises funds for international conservation. HSLF is hard at work ensuring these bills have a hefty number of co-sponsors when they're brought to the House floor.



On Oct. 12, **CALIFORNIA** became the first state in the nation to ban the sale and production of all new fur products when **GOV. GAVIN NEWSOM**, D-Calif., signed the landmark bill into law. It will go into effect in January 2023. As this historic accomplishment illustrates, the federal government doesn't have a monopoly on passing critical animal protection legislation. "That is one of the reasons HSLF is expanding its political activity to include state legislatures and municipalities," says Brad Pyle, HSLF political director. "This year, HSLF made endorsements in five states and reviewed the records and proposals of dozens of candidates for state legislatures and city councils."

