

HUMANE ACTIVIST

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LEGISLATIVE FUND

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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,

Here are some pretty painful examples of your government at work—monkeys on a treadmill, sheep in microgravity and a fight club for shrimp. These examples and more amount to a smack-down of American taxpayers.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., is asking serious questions—in a humorous and eye-catching way—about how taxpayer dollars are being spent. He recently released *Wastebook: The Farce Awakens*, highlighting 100 examples of questionable federal spending

amounting to more than \$100 billion. A number of the projects targeted by Flake deal with animal issues, such as bizarre laboratory experiments that may have some appeal with federal agencies but have limited scientific value and leave a trail of animal victims behind.

For example, \$8 million of taxpayer funding was awarded to the Southwest Primate Research Center, located in Texas, which used part of the grant to study 12 marmoset monkeys forced to run inside an exercise ball on a treadmill. One of the monkeys vomited and three defecated in the exercise ball, and another monkey died during week 11 of the treadmill study. Surely no scientific breakthroughs came from it all.

This is the same primate research center housed at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute, which was the subject of an HSUS undercover investigation into mistreatment of primates who suffered unnecessary injuries and even death. The *Wastebook* report notes, “Over the past decade, the facility has collected nearly \$70 million in grants and contracts from various federal agencies. During this same period, the center has also been slapped with fines totaling more than \$30,000 by the federal government for a number of violations, including performing a necropsy on a baboon that was still alive.”

In another example, NASA spent \$1.2 million to study the effects of microgravity in sheep. Flake writes, “The sheep aren’t floating around inside an anti-gravity chamber or on the International Space Station. Instead, the back leg of each sheep was put in a brace that kept it from bearing weight, simulating the effects of microgravity.” After weeks of this confinement, surgeons removed part of each animal’s leg and then put them back in the brace to see how they recovered in simulated microgravity. The researchers found that “the sheep’s bone density decreased” and the “weakened bone could break more easily.” This type of research, which involves actively harming animals on the government dime, seems to have limited—if any—practical value and there are likely much more useful learnings to be had from astronauts spending actual time in space. Flake notes that extensive research on the same topics has already been done by NASA involving humans.

Flake also targets a \$60 million boondoggle in which the National Pork Board funnels check-off dollars—a tax paid by every pig farmer supposedly for marketing efforts—to a D.C. lobbying group. This shady deal, currently being reviewed by the USDA (as reported in further detail in “The Ayes Have It” on page 8), is an example of how cozy Washington is with special interests in Big Ag who are unlawfully spending check-off dollars to lobby against animal welfare, the environment and family farmers.

Despite rhetoric about favoring smaller government, Congress has allowed many needless programs to continue. We are grateful to Sen. Flake for calling out these wasteful and misguided projects, and we urge other lawmakers to seize the opportunity to save animals and save tax dollars.

Sincerely,

Michael Markarian
President

Humane Society Legislative Fund



Trophy hunters must now secure an import permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to bring heads or skins of African lions into the United States.

A WIN FOR CECIL'S BRETHREN

U.S. GIVES ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT PROTECTION TO AFRICAN LIONS

MEMBERS OF Safari Club International, the world's largest trophy hunting organization, descended on Las Vegas en masse in February for the group's annual convention.

The event came less than two weeks after a federal rule giving African lions protection under the Endangered Species Act went into effect.

All the neon lights of Vegas may not have been enough to chase away the shadow that rule was bound to cast on well-heeled, world-traveling, big-game hunters.

Under the new rule, hunters must now secure an import permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in order to bring heads or skins of African lions into the United States. According to Teresa Telecky, director of wildlife for Humane Society International, permits will only be given where hunters can show that "the import of the lion trophy is going to enhance the survival of wild lion populations." Telecky has called this "a very high bar."

For years, HSLF and its partners endeavored to strengthen protections for African lions un-

der the ESA. The death of Cecil the lion, who was shot by an American dentist with a bow and arrow and left to suffer for hours before being shot again, outraged the public and "gave this effort a renewed focus," says HSLF president Michael Markarian.

HSLF worked with members of Congress who urged the FWS to finalize the African lion listing. House members led by Reps. Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., and Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., and senators led by Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., Bob Menendez, D-N.J., Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Ed Markey, D-Mass., called on the agency to protect lions.

Cecil's death "exposed the pay-to-slay subculture of wealthy people who spend a fortune to kill the grandest, most majestic animals in the world," says Markarian. "We are grateful to these lawmakers for speaking up not only for Cecil, but for all other African lions who are targets of trophy hunters and whose populations are in such sharp decline."

The FWS announcement on December 21 revealed that the African lion would receive greater protection than what had been proposed by FWS in 2014, which would have classified all African lions as threatened. Instead, the subspecies of African lion found in western and central Africa is listed as endangered, while the subspecies found in eastern and southern Africa is listed as threatened.

Adding to the reasons to celebrate, language in the FWS rule indicates the threatened listing for lions in South Africa may bar imports from canned hunting facilities, where unsporting hunters pay to kill lions trapped behind fences.

The impact on Africa's lions will likely be immediate and substantial. Americans imported 727 lion trophies in 2014. That number may hover around 20 this year.

"We hope the lion listing will help to avoid a sequel to Cecil's killing," says Markarian. "Our nation has been a big part of the problem, and now we can be part of the solution."

LEGISLATIVE LINEUP //

THE FOLLOWING is a sample 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. 3268/S. 1121

To amend the Horse Protection Act to end the failed system of industry self-policing, ban the use of devices associated with soring, strengthen penalties and make illegal the actual soring of a horse for the purpose of showing or selling the animal. Sponsors: Reps. Yoho, R-Fla.; Schrader, D-Ore.; Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Cohen, D-Tenn.; Jolly, R-Fla.; Schakowsky, D-Ill. / Sens. Ayotte, R-N.H.; Warner, D-Va.

Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act
H.R. 1942/S. 1214

To ban domestic horse slaughter and stop the export of horses for slaughter abroad and to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States. Sponsors: Reps. Guinta, R-N.H.; Schakowsky, D-Ill.; Buchanan, R-Fla.; Lujan Grisham, D-N.M. / Sens. Menendez, D-N.J.; Graham, R-S.C.; Mikulski, D-Md.; Collins, R-Maine

Thoroughbred Horseracing Integrity Act
H.R. 3084

To improve the integrity and safety of thoroughbred horseracing by creating a single independent organization, with a majority of board seats held by officials of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, to develop and enforce uniform national anti-doping rules for thoroughbred racing. Sponsors: Reps. Barr, R-Ky.; Tonko, D-N.Y.

WILDLIFE



Refuge from Cruel Trapping Act
H.R. 2016/S. 1081

To end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Sponsors: Rep. Lowey, D-N.Y. / Sen. Booker, D-N.J.

CECIL Animal Trophies Bills
H.R. 3526/H.R. 3448/S. 1918

To prevent imports and exports of trophies from species proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Sponsors: Rep. Grijalva, D-Ariz. / Rep. Jackson Lee, D-Texas / Sen. Menendez, D-N.J.

Tusker Act (Targeted Use of Sanctions for Killing Elephants and Rhinoceros)
H.R. 1945

To amend the African Elephant Conservation Act to make it a policy to prevent additional African elephant ivory from entering global commerce, and to reduce demand for ivory that is driving elephant poaching by limiting natural resources-related trade with countries whose nationals are engaged in illegal ivory trade. Sponsor: Rep. DeFazio, D-Ore.

Global Anti-Poaching Act/Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Act/Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act
H.R. 2494/S. 27/S. 2385

To support and strengthen domestic and international efforts to combat the global epidemic of wildlife trafficking. Sponsors: Reps. Royce, R-Calif.; Engel, D-N.Y. / Sens. Feinstein, D-Calif.; Graham, R-S.C. / Sens. Coons, D-Del.; Flake, R-Ariz.

PETS AND CRUELTY



Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act

H.R. 2293/S. 1831

To strengthen the animal crush video law and prohibit those same extreme acts of animal cruelty when they occur in interstate or foreign commerce, regardless of whether or not a video was produced. Sponsors: Reps. Smith, R-Texas; Deutch, D-Fla.; Marino, R-Pa.; Blumenauer, D-Ore. / Sens. Toomey, R-Pa.; Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act

H.R. 1258/S. 1559

To expand federal domestic violence protections to include safeguards for the pets of abuse victims on a national level and to provide grant money for domestic violence shelters to better accommodate families with pets. Sponsors: Reps. Clark, D-Mass.; Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla. / Sens. Ayotte, R-N.H.; Peters, D-Mich.



Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act

H.R. 359

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a five-year pilot program to assess the effectiveness of addressing veterans' post-deployment mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder through programs in which veterans learn to train and handle service dogs for disabled veterans. Sponsors: Reps. Stivers, R-Ohio; Walz, D-Minn.

Wounded Warrior Service Dog Act

H.R. 2493

To require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to jointly establish a K-9 Companion Corps Program that will award competitive grants to nonprofit organizations for the planning, designing, establishing or operating of programs that provide assistance dogs to covered military members and veterans. Sponsor: Rep. McGovern, D-Mass.

ANIMAL RESEARCH



Humane Cosmetics Act

H.R. 2858

To phase out animal testing of cosmetic products and ingredients as well as the sale of newly animal-tested cosmetics. Sponsors: Reps. McSally, D-Ariz.; Beyer, D-Va.; Heck, R-Nev.; Cárdenas, D-Calif.

Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act

S. 697

To improve the science behind chemical testing, encourage better safety decisions to protect the environment and human health and reduce the use of live animals. Sponsors: Sens. Udall, D-N.M.; Vitter, R-La.; Booker, D-N.J.

FARM ANIMALS



Animal Welfare in Agricultural Research Endeavors (AWARE) Act

H.R. 746/S. 388

To remove a loophole in the Animal Welfare Act and ensure that farm animals used for agricultural research at federal government facilities receive the basic care required under the AWA. Sponsors: Reps. Blumenauer, D-Ore.; Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Buchanan, R-Fla.; Slaughter, D-N.Y. / Sens. Booker, D-N.J.; Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA)/Preventing Antibiotic Resistance Act (PARA)

H.R. 1552/S. 621

To phase out routine nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in farm animals—a common practice to promote growth and compensate for overcrowded, stressful, unsanitary conditions on factory farms—in order to maintain the effectiveness of these medicines for treating sick people and animals. Sponsors: Rep. Slaughter, D-N.Y. / Sens. Feinstein, D-Calif.; Collins, R-Maine



Gross neglect and other instances of animal cruelty will now be included in the FBI's Uniform Crime Report database.

TRACKING CRUELTY

FBI BEGINS COLLECTING DATA ON ANIMAL ABUSE

IN TOO MANY COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT the nation, horrific cases of animal cruelty occur. A neglected horse starves to death. A cat and her kittens are set on fire. Dogs are forced to fight to the death in a pit.

Unlike violent crimes against people, information on reported cases of animal abuse have not been routinely compiled by state and federal agencies, making it difficult for authorities and animal protection advocates to calculate the prevalence or trends in these crimes.

For years, HSLF, the Doris Day Animal League, The Humane Society of the United States, the National Sheriffs' Association and members of Congress have urged the FBI to include animal cruelty as a separate category in its Uniform Crime Reporting Program. Our efforts finally paid off, and in January, law enforcement officials began voluntarily submitting reports about crimes against animals to the UCR, the same way they have long submitted reports about crimes like murder and arson.

"The change in reporting signals from the highest levels of government the importance of protecting animals and our communities," says HSLF president Michael Markarian. "Now, no longer will extremely violent criminal acts escape the attention of the FBI simply because the victims were animals."

Under the UCR, animal crimes will be broken into four categories: intentional abuse, simple and gross neglect, organized abuse (such as animal fighting) and bestiality.

"With this data we can identify what types of animal cruelty are most prevalent and where they are most prevalent," says John Goodwin, HSLF political director and a national authority on crimes against animals. "That's vital information for putting together effective strategies to combat animal cruelty."

Police and sheriffs' departments, in particular, will be able to get a picture of what's happening in their own regions and states. This will make law enforcement agencies "better able to allocate officers and financial resources to handle these cases, track trends and deploy accordingly," says Markarian.

Previously, animal cruelty crimes submitted by law enforcement agents to the federal database were recorded in a catch-all "other" category.

"No one had a breakdown of what the 'other' category was. What were these other crimes?" asks Goodwin. "You just had no idea."

Obtaining a national snapshot of crimes against animals has proved especially difficult because animal cruelty is enforced by a variety of bodies, including the police, animal control and humane society agents.

The federal government collecting information about crimes against animals serves a practical purpose, Goodwin says, but it's also important symbolically. "It signals to law enforcement at all levels that animal cruelty crimes are important and they need to be investigated and prosecuted."

EATING HEALTHY ON THE HILL

CONGRESSWOMAN CONVERTS TO CLEAN COOKING

AS CHAIRWOMAN of the Democratic National Committee, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) maintains a grueling schedule when Congress is in session, one that usually means leaving for work at 8 a.m. and returning to the row house she shares with two other congresswomen around 9 or 10 p.m. Such long days make healthy eating tough, she says.

Wasserman Schultz—who has a history of leadership on animal protection issues in Congress and scored 100 on the 2015 *Humane Scorecard*—once dreamed of being a veterinarian. But after she entered college, a stint with the University of Florida’s student senate drew her into politics. She has since championed bills to protect polar bears, wild horses, puppy mill dogs, great apes and other animals.

In 2007, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. The surgeries that followed and weight gain from medications sparked a desire to eat better. She also didn’t want her three kids to grow up without a mom. “It was a time to really focus on . . . the lifestyle I was going to adopt in order to be able to make sure I was going to be around,” she says.

At her south Florida home, the vegetable garden her husband and kids built for her as a Mother’s Day gift offers a bounty of fresh ingredients for home-cooked dishes, as do a variety of fruit trees they planted. But back in the Capitol, wholesome eating continued to present a challenge. “Every lunch, every reception, there’s constantly calorie-laden sugary or savory foods or hors d’oeuvres,” she says.

Then a newly hired staff assistant told her about a vegetarian lunch club at a previous job. Wasserman Schultz encouraged the assistant to start one at the DNC. Since its inception in December 2014, the Vegetarian Lunch Club has grown from eight to 24 members. Groups are divided into eight people, who each cook a vegetarian dish twice a month. Lunches are served Monday through Thursday in the kitchen area of the DNC.

Wasserman Schultz schedules her cooking days to coincide with nights when she’ll get home early. “I have to make sure it’s going to fit my schedule, and I’m not having to cook at 3 a.m.,” she says.

She frequently chats with Capitol Hill colleagues about “clean eating”—a diet that isn’t completely vegetarian but centers on minimally processed foods, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. She trades recipes with other lunch club members and hosted a cooking class last summer for fellow Democratic legislators. She also posts photos of her own kitchen creations on Instagram (@cleancookingcongresswoman). “I try not to evangelize, but I’m very enthusiastic when engaged about my commitment,” she says.

When colleagues tell her they can’t imagine sticking to a clean eating plan, even if they can have an occasional cookie or french fry, Wasserman Schultz says she can’t imagine going back to her old ways. “Once I made a decision to eat healthy and be more focused on what I put in my body, it actually became easier to turn stuff like that down.”



Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) prepares a healthy meal to share with members of the Democratic National Committee’s Vegetarian Lunch Club.



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THE EYES HAVE IT //



➡ After a ruling by the **D.C. CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS** cleared the way, the U.S. Department of Agriculture agreed to review a backroom deal that has been funneling millions of federally-supervised dollars to the National Pork Producers Council, a private trade association that regularly lobbies against animal protection legislation. The action was taken after several plaintiffs filed a lawsuit in 2012 charging that the National Pork Board handed over its “Pork: The Other White Meat” slogan to the NPPC, which subsequently sold the slogan back to the Pork Board for \$60 million (\$3 million a year over 20 years). The funds being paid to the NPPC come from a mandatory check-off program—essentially, a tax on pig producers—and are intended to be used to promote the sale of farm products, not to fund special interest lobbying efforts. The USDA review will be completed in May.

➡ **SMITHFIELD FOODS**, the world’s largest pork company, announced in January that 81.8 percent of its domestic company-owned operations have shifted from using gestation crates to sow group housing, with plans to reach 100 percent by 2017. The company’s international operations—including those in Mexico—and its U.S. contractors, will all use sow group housing by 2022 (Smithfield European operations are already at 100 percent). For decades, most U.S. pork producers have kept breeding pigs in gestation crates too small for the animals to even turn around. Sow group housing—which allows pigs to move around and socialize—is a step in the right direction.

➡ **FELD ENTERTAINMENT, INC.**, the parent company of Ringling Bros., announced in January that it would retire its touring elephants in May, almost two years earlier than previously announced. The beleaguered animals will finally leave behind unnatural lives spent in traveling circus shows for a retirement at the company’s “Center for Elephant Conservation” in Florida.

➡ The **NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE** announced it will take action to expand the boundaries of existing critical habitat in the North Atlantic for right whales. In 2009, a petition was filed with the federal government requesting the habitat expansion. When NMFS took no action, a suit over the delay was filed in 2014, resulting in the recent response. Despite their being federally protected since 1970, right whales have still not rebounded. Only about 450 of these critically endangered whales exist. The federal government must now ensure that activities such as shipping, commercial fishing, drilling, and oil and gas exploration will not diminish the value of the habitat or reduce the right whale’s chance of recovery.

