

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,

The forecasts were ominous: Hurricane Harvey was dumping historic amounts of rain on Houston, the nation's fourth largest city. Hurricane Irma would soon be forming in the Atlantic Ocean and head toward the heavily populated Florida peninsula after decimating parts of the Caribbean. With memories of Hurricane Katrina on their minds, animal advocates braced for the worst.

The two disasters that hit the mainland U.S. would be the biggest tests so far of a law that was enacted after Katrina, when many pet owners in Louisiana and Mississippi faced a devastating choice—stay with their pets or move to safer areas and leave their animals behind. At the time, emergency shelters and many government emergency transports wouldn't take pets. An untold number of people chose to stay with their pets and perished.

After Katrina, HSLF and The HSUS worked with Congress to pass the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act in 2006, requiring that emergency management agencies include pets and service animals in disaster plans. We saw disaster responses improve after then-President George W. Bush signed the PETS Act into law, and it became more commonplace to see pet-friendly shelters open during evacuations for disasters both big and small. The Harvey response would show just how much the landscape had changed, since city officials didn't announce evacuation orders for Houston, and thousands of people and their pets needed to be rescued from flooded homes.

As The HSUS and other animal welfare groups rushed in to help, we also saw other first responders and civilian rescuers arriving. Whether in Coast Guard helicopters, dump trucks or private boats, they hoisted family after family out of flooded homes and onto dry land. And this time, those families were whole. Rescuers with multiple agencies eagerly lifted dogs and cats to safety and back into the arms of their families. Not left behind—not this time, and not ever again.

As National Public Radio's "Weekend Edition Saturday" host Scott Simon told his audience after nearly a week of rescues airing on live television, "This week, we saw what an act of Congress can do. It may have saved not only the lives of cats and dogs, who were carried out in the arms of their owners and rescuers, but the lives of people who love those animals as members of their family and wouldn't have left them."

In a year that will otherwise go down in our nation's history as one marked by partisan divide, we were gratified to see the lifesaving impacts of a bipartisan law enacted over a decade ago. The PETS Act prevented what surely would have been a much higher loss of life—human and animal—in Florida and Texas had pets been left out of the equation.

At HSLF, we strive to bring our elected representatives together to craft bipartisan solutions that will make a better world for people and animals. And we're so grateful to have you by our side every step of the way.

Sincerely,

Michael Markarian

President

Humane Society Legislative Fund

The farm bill, which sets five-year policies for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, could have major impacts on animal welfare.



The farm bill is coming

MASSIVE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE CAN HELP OR HINDER ANIMAL PROTECTION EFFORTS

MORE THAN A DOZEN independent family farmers and ranchers descended on Washington, D.C., in July to meet with federal lawmakers and officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Organized by HSLF and The HSUS and dubbed the Farmer Fly-In, the event introduced decision-makers in the nation's capital to family farmers and ranchers who embrace animal welfare and sustainability and who have very different needs and concerns than those pitched by the big ag lobbyists.

"This really gave us a chance to tell people who are in decision-making levels of the administration: These are the things we need as farmers and as people who serve farmers," says Amanda Carter of Marion, North Carolina. Carter manages the Foothills Pilot Plant, a USDA-inspected poultry-slaughter facility that emphasizes humane handling of animals.

A frequent topic of conversation among Fly-In participants was the coming negotiations on the farm bill, which are expected to begin in late 2017. Passed about every five

years, the far-reaching piece of legislation is an opportunity for HSLF and other advocates to realize significant gains in animal protection. Reps. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., and Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., mobilized a joint letter cosigned by 40 Republican and 40 Democratic members asking House agriculture committee leaders to "include bipartisan animal welfare reforms in the 2018 farm bill," as Congress has done in the last three farm bills.

Several free-standing animal welfare bills, endowed with substantial bipartisan support in Congress, could be folded into the mammoth package. While visiting the offices of U.S. legislators, the farmers and ranchers attending the Fly-In stressed their support for including the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act (H.R. 1753/S. 741) in the farm bill. The OFF Act seeks to reform check-off programs that give hundreds of millions of dollars to unaccountable organizations that fight against family farmers and plant-based small businesses. Checkoff funds have been used to fight animal welfare laws, including

measures to protect dogs on puppy mills and to end horse abuse and slaughter.

Other bills that could be folded into the package include legislation to help horses, companion animals and animals in research. "Dozens of issues related to our work could be included," says Marty Irby, senior adviser for HSLF.

At the same time, however, the farm bill presents an opening for some lawmakers to try to roll back reforms and undermine animal welfare. Given several votes in Congress this year to scale back protections for animals, we expect some tough battles ahead.

The No Regulation Without Representation Act (H.R. 2887), introduced by Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., could invalidate state laws that protect animals and the environment. (For more on this bill, see the Sept/Oct issue of *Humane Activist*.) Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, introduced the Protect Interstate Commerce Act (H.R. 3599)—rehashing his controversial attempts to create a blanket federal pre-emption of state and local standards regarding agriculture products. HSLF is already working to rally a broad coalition of individuals and organizations to oppose these sweeping and unconstitutional attacks on the rights of states to establish standards to protect consumers and animal welfare.

Carter will be keeping close tabs on which measures get woven into the final farm bill. Her trip to Washington, D.C., gave birth to a new passion for political activism.

"I'm a little fired up by this experience," she says, adding that she plans to watch the farm bill debates on TV and to visit the local offices of her members of Congress.

+ SIGN UP for email updates on the farm bill and ways you can get involved at hslf.org.



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.

Pets and Cruelty



Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act

H.R. 1494 / S. 654

To prohibit extreme acts of animal cruelty when they occur on federal property or in interstate or foreign commerce. Sponsors: Reps. Smith, R-Texas; Deutch, D-Fla. / Sens. Toomey, R-Pa.; Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act

H.R. 909 / S. 322

To expand federal domestic violence protections to include pets and help arrange shelter for the pets of abuse victims. Sponsors: Reps. Clark, D-Mass.; Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla.; Nolan, D-Minn.; Denham, R-Calif.; Cohen, D-Tenn.; Walters, R-Calif. / Sens. Peters, D-Mich.; Heller, R-Nev.

Dog and Cat Meat Prohibition Act

H.R. 1406

To prohibit the slaughter and trade of dogs and cats for human consumption and provide penalties for individuals involved in the dog or cat meat trade in the U.S. Sponsors: Reps. Hastings, D-Fla.; Buchanan, R-Fla.; Trott, R-Mich.; Boyle, D-Pa.



Help Extract Animals from Red Tape (HEART) Act

H.R. 398

To require that owners of animals seized in federal animal fighting cases cover the cost of caring for them while they are held for evidence and to expedite their adoption. Sponsors: Reps. Katko, R-N.Y.; Chu, D-Calif.

Equines



Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act

H.R. 113 / S. 1706

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

Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act

H.R. 1847

To amend the Horse Protection Act to end the failed system of industry self-policing and use of devices integral to 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.; Marino, R-Pa.; Cohen, D-Tenn.; Collins, R-N.Y.; Schakowsky, D-Ill.

Horseracing Integrity Act

H.R. 2651

To end doping of all race horses, including same-day drugging, by putting the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (the nonprofit that runs anti-doping programs for the U.S. Olympics and other games) in charge of setting national uniform rules on medication use in horse racing. Sponsors: Reps. Barr, R-Ky.; Tonko, D-N.Y.

Wildlife



Big Cat Public Safety Act

H.R. 1818

To prohibit possession and breeding of lions, tigers, lions, leopards and other big cat species by individuals and unqualified exhibitors. Sponsors: Reps. Denham, R-Calif.; Jones, R-N.C.; Tsongas, D-Mass.

Chemical Poisons Reduction Act

H.R. 1817

To prohibit the use of two particularly dangerous and indiscriminate poisons—Compound 1080 and sodium cyanide—in predator control programs. Sponsor: Rep. DeFazio, D-Ore.

Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act

H.R. 1456 / S. 793

To prohibit and establish penalties for possession, sales or purchases of shark fins or any product containing shark fins. (The House version is titled the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act.) Sponsors: Reps. Royce, R-Calif.; Sablan, D-Northern Marianas / Sens. Booker, D-N.J.; Capito, R-W.Va. (Approved by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.)

Government Transparency



Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act

H.R. 1368 / S. 503

To require the USDA to restore online searchable access to inspection reports and other vital records relating to enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act, and to establish an additional deterrent against animal abuse. Sponsors: Rep. Blumenauer, D-Ore. / Sen. Wyden, D-Ore.

Farm Animals



Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act

H.R. 1753 / S. 741

To reform agriculture checkoff programs funneling tens of millions of dollars to farm commodity groups that use the money to lobby against animal welfare, engage in anti-competitive protection for large producers and block other reforms. Sponsors: Reps. Brat, R-Va.; Titus, D-Nev. / Sens. Lee, R-Utah; Booker, D-N.J.

Animal Research



Humane Cosmetics Act

H.R. 2790

To prohibit animal testing for cosmetic products manufactured or sold in the United States. Sponsors: Reps. McSally, R-Ariz.; Beyer, D-Va.; Royce, R-Calif.; Cárdenas, D-Calif.; LoBiondo, R-N.J.; Tonko, D-N.Y.

Preventing Unkind and Painful Procedures and Experiments on Respected Species (PUPPERS) Act

H.R. 3197

To prohibit the Department of Veterans Affairs from conducting medical research that causes significant pain or distress to dogs. Sponsors: Reps. Brat, R-Va.; Titus, D-Nev. (Passed the House as an amendment to a defense spending package.)



Federal Accountability in Chemical Testing (FACT) Act

H.R. 816

To amend the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods Authorization Act of 2000 to improve reporting about animal testing and use of alternative test methods by federal agencies. Sponsor: Rep. Calvert, R-Calif.

Battlefield Excellence through Superior Training (BEST) Practices Act

H.R. 1243 / S. 498

To expedite the Defense Department's replacement of live animals with advanced technologies including manikins for training personnel in medical trauma treatment. Sponsors: Rep. Johnson, D-Ga. / Sen. Wyden, D-Ore.



Veteran Bill Smith says the greatest benefit of having his service dog, Venuto, by his side "is the bond and what he does for me emotionally."

Dogs saved their lives

BILLS WOULD HELP CONNECT VETERANS WITH SERVICE DOGS

AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of Warrior Canine Connection (WCC), Rick Yount has witnessed the magical effect that a dog and a sense of purpose can have on the human psyche.

A nonprofit based in Maryland, WCC pairs veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury with a dog to train for service to other disabled veterans. The act of training service dogs for their peers gives the former service members a sense of purpose, says Yount, who is a licensed social worker. When veterans have to teach the dogs to remain calm in different situations, Yount points out, they are reinforcing in their own minds that the world is mostly a safe place. And because

program participants have to take the dogs out in public, they're venturing out in the world, too.

"You're getting veterans to challenge their intrusive thoughts in the very second they're happening and then being grounded by the presence of the dogs and the mission of training the dogs for a fellow vet," Yount explains.

It takes about two years to train a service dog. Unfortunately, the demand for service dogs by disabled veterans far outweighs the supply at WCC and similar organizations. A handful of HSLF-supported bills introduced this year are designed to change that. "Veterans are saying, 'We need these dogs. This is

helping us,'" Yount says. "And I think Congress is responding."

The Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers (PAWS) Act (H.R. 2327/S. 1014) was reintroduced by Reps. Ron DeSantis, R-Fla., and Stephen Lynch, D-Mass., and Sens. Deb Fischer, R-Neb., and Cory Booker, D-N.J. The PAWS Act, which has 202 House cosponsors, authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to fund a five-year program that would provide service dogs to veterans with PTSD at no cost. Currently, the VA covers veterinary and equipment expenses for animals serving physically disabled veterans, but offers no financial support for veterans who use a service animal to cope with PTSD symptoms. The bills also direct the VA to study the impact of pairing dogs with veterans suffering from PTSD.

The Wounded Warrior Service Dog Act (H.R. 2625), reintroduced by Reps. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., and Walter Jones, R-N.C., would authorize \$25 million to fund a five-year competitive grant program, with the money going to selected organizations that train service dogs for disabled service members and veterans.

The Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act (H.R. 2225), reintroduced by Reps. Steve Stivers, R-Ohio, and Tim Walz, D-Minn., would fund a pilot program where veterans suffering from PTSD participate in therapeutic dog training and handling. This bill also mandates that the VA study the program's effectiveness. The House passed an identical bill in the last Congress, but the Senate didn't act on it.

With several bills now in play, Yount feels optimistic that one will eventually make it through Congress and onto the president's desk.

"I think Congress has really become frustrated with the amount of time it's taken to get these dogs in the hands of veterans," he says. "Everybody is very cognizant of the suicide rate among veterans, and here you have many, many veterans stating that their dogs saved their life."

+ ASK your federal legislators to support these bills. Go to hslf.org/leglookup to find their contact information.

Recent actions in Congress could spell trouble for American horses, including the iconic wild mustangs of our western states.



A looming threat

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS VOTE TO RESUME HORSE SLAUGHTER

LAWMAKERS WITH THE LOUDEST VOICES in favor of reopening horse slaughter plants in the United States often turn reality on its head by arguing that they are somehow helping horses when they are actually paving the road to an inhumane death.

For many years, HSLF and our army of supporters have been able to isolate those voices and maintain a ban on horse slaughter through legislative maneuvering that prohibits using tax dollars to fund U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspections of horse slaughter plants.

Ever since the last U.S. horse slaughter plants closed in 2007, Congress has included this popular “defund” amendment in the federal budget and annual funding measures. But in July, 27 members of the House Appropriations Committee voted not to include the defund amendment in the USDA’s annual spending bill. (Twenty-five members voted in favor of the amendment.)

Of course, if the lawmakers who support horse slaughter are truly concerned about the well-being of horses, they could join the more than 200 congressional lawmakers cosponsoring the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act (H.R. 113/S. 1706), which would permanently ban domestic horse slaughter for human consumption and end transports of American horses to foreign slaughterhouses.

Instead, they’ve elected to waste tax dollars on overseeing an industry that an overwhelming majority of Americans disapprove of. “I hope the members who profess to be fiscal conservatives will reflect upon this vote that would have saved millions of taxpayer dollars annually—and begin to practice what they preach,” says Marty Irby, senior adviser for HSLF.

Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., who is one of the most vocal opponents of horse slaughter on Capitol Hill, tried to undo the damage by submitting

the defund amendment to an appropriations package when it reached the House floor. The GOP-led House Committee on Rules blocked a floor vote on the amendment, which had bipartisan support—a move that didn’t rest well with Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fla., who sits on the committee. Buchanan’s sensible measure against horse slaughter, he argued, would have surely passed if it had been allowed to go to members of Congress for a vote. “I hope y’all wind up having to eat horse, and I mean that,” he said, perhaps referencing a 2013 food safety scandal in Europe where lab tests showed products labeled beef actually contained horsemeat.

The Senate Appropriations Committee had earlier voted in favor of the defund amendment, and HSLF, with help from our supporters, will be working to convince the lawmakers who will settle this issue to leave horse slaughter funding out of the package that goes to President Trump.

The summer’s other worrying news for equines came when the House Appropriations Committee voted to adopt an amendment, offered by Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah, to lift the long-term prohibition on the destruction of healthy wild horses and burros. Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., later presented an amendment that would have prohibited the slaughter of healthy wild horses and burros under the care of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but the House rules committee also blocked a floor vote on that amendment.

As of press deadline, the Senate had not yet acted on the Interior Appropriations bill, which includes funding for the BLM’s Wild Horse and Burro Program. While there are more votes to be taken, Irby was disheartened that so many lawmakers appear willing to kill horses.

“It’s definitely not good,” he says. “I would say we probably have seen more of a resurgence of pro-slaughter members in this Congress than we’ve seen in many years.”

+ ASK your members of Congress to cosponsor the SAFE Act to ban horse slaughter for human consumption and stop exports of horses to foreign slaughter plants at hslf.org/SAFE.



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THE EYES HAVE IT //



➡ Members of **FLORIDA'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION** won't stay silent when it comes to protecting the official state animal. In letters to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson and Republican Reps. Vern Buchanan and Matt Gaetz urged the agency to maintain Endangered Species Act protections for the Florida panther. The panther was one of 14 mammals originally placed on the endangered species list in 1967, and there are no more than 230 of the cats alive today. "Florida panthers have become an iconic symbol for the wilderness and beauty of Florida," Buchanan wrote in his letter. "Major hurdles remain to the full recovery of these majestic animals."

➡ **NEW HAMPSHIRE GOV. CHRIS SUNUNU** announced he is revamping a state panel to create stronger animal protection laws. The Republican governor's press conference came on the heels of the June rescue of 84 Great Danes from horrific conditions at a suspected puppy mill. Sununu and HSLF both support legislation to update the state's commercial breeder regulations and to hold perpetrators responsible for the costs of caring for animals seized in cruelty cases.

➡ **ILLINOIS GOV. BRUCE RAUNER, R**, enacted the first state law to ban the use of elephants in circuses and other traveling exhibitions. Sponsored by state **SEN. LINDA HOLMES, D-Aurora**, the new law will take effect on Jan. 1, 2018. "The public has come to see that these animals are victims, not willing performers," says Marc Ayers, Illinois state director for The HSUS. "Illinois

has taken a monumental step in ending this outdated form of entertainment, and we urge other cities and states to follow suit."

➡ **BRITISH COLUMBIA** will ban trophy hunting of grizzly bears beginning Nov. 30. Under the prior provincial government, B.C. had become the world's hub for grizzly bear hunting, with trophy hunters killing 250 bears a year. In a 2015 poll, more than 90 percent of B.C. residents opposed trophy hunting.

➡ South Korea's president **MOON JAE-IN** kept an election promise by adopting a rescue dog. The country's new "first dog" is a 4-year-old mixed breed named Tori, who was rescued just days before being sold to a dog butcher. Animal advocates hope that the latest addition to the Moon family will increase public opposition to the dog meat trade by highlighting the fact that there is no difference between dogs raised for meat and those kept as pets.

