



Animal Welfare Institute

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June 14, 2018

Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McCarthy:

Six months ago, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act (S. 654). You may recall that in a letter I sent to you on January 29 of this year, I highlighted this important piece of legislation and called upon you to bring the House version of this bill, H.R. 1494 introduced by Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), to the floor for a vote. With the Senate having acted long ago on this bill, I once again respectfully ask that the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act (H.R. 1494) be scheduled for floor action.

Current federal law prohibits the creation and distribution of “crush videos” in which individuals maliciously torture, mutilate and kill small animals in order to cater to the sadistic fetishes of viewers. However, the law neglects to prohibit the underlying acts of animal abuse these videos promote, which can be difficult to prosecute under state anti-cruelty statutes. H.R. 1494 closes this loophole.

With 282 cosponsors, H.R. 1494 has the support of more than 60 percent of House members. This is just one vital piece of legislation that would enhance animal welfare. As I noted in my January 29 letter, the following bills also have strong bipartisan support and equally deserve floor consideration:

- [Pet and Women Safety \(PAWS\) Act \(H.R. 909\)](#): Often, beloved family pets fall victim to domestic violence. Abusers exploit the bond between their victims and companion animals to control, manipulate, frighten and punish victims. This connection between animal cruelty and domestic violence creates a real obstacle for the many survivors who seek to leave their abusive partners. In fact, many victims won't leave their abuser out of fear for their pets. The PAWS Act would respond to this crisis by helping programs provide shelter and housing assistance for domestic violence survivors and their companion animals. This bill would bridge the gap between the pressing need for services for survivors with pets and the ability of agencies to meet that demand. H.R. 909 is sponsored by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Katherine Clark (D-MA) and has 248 cosponsors—more than half of the House of Representatives.
- [Shark Fin Sales Trade Elimination Act \(H.R. 1456\)](#): Shark finning is the cruel practice of removing a shark's fin and discarding the mutilated carcass into the sea where the animal will die of suffocation or predation. As long as a domestic market for shark fins and shark fin products remains, the United States will continue to perpetuate the global shark fin trade. This legislation removes the United States from the global shark fin trade by banning the sale, importation and exportation of shark fins. A Senate committee has already approved its version of this bill; the House of Representatives should do the same. H.R. 1456, which was introduced by Reps. Ed Royce (R-CA) and Gregorio Sablan (D-MP), has 238 cosponsors—again, more than half of the House.

- Humane Cosmetics Act (H.R. 2790): Today, more than 1.7 billion consumers live in countries—including India and the entire European Union—that have banned cosmetics testing on animals and the sale of cosmetics tested on animals. The United States has yet to enact such measures. H.R. 2790 would phase out the testing of cosmetics on live animals and the sale of animal-tested cosmetics in this country, allowing for cutting-edge technologies to replace the use of inhumane and outdated animal testing. This bill is sponsored by Reps. Martha McSally (R-AZ) and Don Beyer (D-VA) and has 173 cosponsors—more than one-third of the House.

It is my sincere hope that, with your leadership, the House of Representatives will act soon on H.R. 1494 and these other bills that enjoy such strong bipartisan support.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Ljss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy Ljss
President