



October 26, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:

On behalf of our respective organizations and our millions of supporters nationwide, we are writing to request that any spending legislation passed by Congress in the coming weeks (e.g., a Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations package) that funds the National Veterinary Stockpile or other animal disease prevention measures that are intended to combat the threat of African Swine Fever facing the country's pig populations, prohibit the use of such funds on some of the most inhumane methods of depopulation. Such methods—which include ventilation shutdown, ventilation shutdown plus (with added heat), and lacing feed and water with toxic levels of sodium nitrite—cause prolonged suffering to pigs and should not be subsidized by American taxpayers.

When the pandemic disrupted the supply chain and temporarily shut down many slaughterhouses, producers depopulated animals en masse. Unfortunately, some producers resorted to particularly inhumane methods such as ventilation shutdown, which entails turning off the airflow in a barn and leaving animals trapped inside to die from heat stress and suffocation. Recent concern over African Swine Fever has led to fears that pigs will once again be depopulated in large numbers to quell potential outbreaks, prompting the need to plan ahead to ensure particularly inhumane methods of depopulation are not used by pig producers.

As Congress considers whether to direct funding to the agriculture sector for this purpose—which could potentially include investments in the National Veterinary Stockpile for large

animal depopulation equipment, compensation for livestock losses, or financial assistance for producers to carry out depopulations—we ask that such provisions come with conditions prohibiting the use of taxpayer dollars to finance the egregiously cruel pig depopulation methods outlined above.

Preventing the needless suffering of farm animals is a concern shared by a broad swath of the American public. If assistance pertaining to pig depopulation is indeed included in spending legislation, we hope that Congress will ensure that federal funds do not support some of the most cruel methods, including ventilation shutdown, ventilation shutdown plus and sodium nitrite. Such direction from Congress is imperative in order to protect the public and minimize suffering of farm animals when the inevitable next disease outbreak or crisis occurs.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Seggerman
Senior Director of Federal Affairs
Government Relations
**American Society for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals**

Kim Kelly
Director of Legislative Affairs
Animal Legal Defense Fund

Dena Jones
Director, Farm Animal Program
Animal Welfare Institute

Gail Eisnitz
Chief Investigator
Humane Farming Association

Tracie Letterman
Vice President, Federal Affairs
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Kate Brindle
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Farm Animal Protection
Humane Society of the United States

Pam Runquist
Executive Director
**Humane Society Veterinary Medical
Association**

AJ Albrecht
Director of Government Affairs
Mercy for Animals