



Animal Welfare Institute

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January 29, 2018

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

Dear Majority Leader McCarthy:

Since the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) was founded in 1951, it has worked closely with members of Congress of both parties to alleviate pain and suffering of animals inflicted by people. Our legislative victories include the adoption of the Humane Slaughter Act in 1958, the Animal Welfare Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Animal welfare has been an issue with many legislators on both sides of the aisle; many of the bills AWI supports have broad bipartisan support.

With the second session of the 115th Congress in session, and the government now fully funded and operating, I wanted to call your attention to several bills that offer practical and humane solutions to pressing animal welfare (and, in a number of cases, public safety) concerns. I hope that you will help us achieve gains in animal welfare by allowing the House of Representatives to vote on these bills.

- Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act (H.R. 909): Any member of a household can become a victim of domestic violence: spouses or partners, children, and pets. Abusers are well aware of the bond between their victims and companion animals and they exploit that bond to control, manipulate, frighten, and punish such victims. This connection between animal cruelty and domestic violence creates an all-too-real obstacle for the many survivors who want to leave their abusive partners. In fact, fear of what might happen to their pets keeps many victims from leaving. 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 tremendous need for services for survivors with pets and the ability of agencies to meet that need. H.R. 909 is sponsored by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Katherine Clark (D-MA) and has 246 cosponsors, over 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. 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; it's time for the House of Representatives to take up its bill, H.R. 1456, which was introduced by Reps. Ed Royce (R-CA) and Gregorio Sablan (D-MP), and has 233 cosponsors—once again, more than half of the House.
- Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act (H.R. 1494): The PACT Act would prohibit particularly heinous and unspeakable acts of animal abuse perpetrated in the making of “crush videos” to satisfy sadistic fetishes. On December 14, the Senate unanimously passed its version

of the PACT Act. Currently, H.R. 1494 has 273 cosponsors—over 60 percent of the members 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 is not yet one of them. H.R. 2790 would phase out the testing of cosmetics on live animals and the sale of animal-tested cosmetics in this country, paving the way for cutting-edge technologies to replace inhumane and outdated animal testing. This bill is sponsored by Reps. Martha McSally (R-AZ) and Don Beyer (D-VA) and has 169 cosponsors, more than one-third of the House.

These bills have strong bipartisan support and deserve a full vote on the floor of the House of Representatives. It is my sincere hope that, as in past Congresses, the House of Representatives will be able to advance animal welfare and pass these important pieces of legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Cathy Liss
President