

## Long-Time Leader of Ending Animal Cruelty, Castle Pushes Bill to Close Loopholes -- August 7, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle and 51 other Members introduced the Federal Dog Protection Act, to improve animal protection laws. Under this bill, criminals would face up to a 5-year sentence and a \$250,000 fine for each count. Rep. Castle believes that in light of the Michael Vick case, broader federal laws against animal fighting are needed to catch all who play a part in such criminal behavior.

"There is no excuse for animal cruelty. As we have recently seen, many individuals can be involved in animal fighting rings. Congress made great progress earlier this year by passing the Animal Fighting Protection Act, which the President signed into law in May. This bill takes another step towards the root of the problem by penalizing spectators and removing all economic incentives for cultivating dog fighting networks. Americans have no tolerance for animal abuse and I feel confident that this bill can better equip law enforcement to crack down at the earliest signs of such an operation," Castle said.

Specifically, the Federal Dog Protection Act will:

- Ban animal fighting and anything associated with it, such as training tools, videos and magazines;
- Allow private entities that care for and house animals that have been rescued by federal agents to recoup their expenses; and
- Permit private citizens to sue any person alleged to be in violation of the law.

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