

Together We Can Eliminate Dogfighting in Delaware -- November 2007

Recent studies have estimated that approximately 250,000 dogs are forced into pits for fighting each year and across the nation. While it is illegal in all 50 states and participating in or possessing dogs for the purpose of dog fighting is a felony, this practice still takes place -- even here in Delaware. This summer, The News Journal reported that Delaware authorities have made over two dozen dogfighting arrests since 2000, but convicting and sentencing the perpetrators of these crimes is often a challenge. For this reason, it is important for us to learn the signs of dogfighting so we can be vigilant in our own communities. Knowing the signs, and reaching out to local and state officials, we can help bring the participants of animal fighting to justice.

I recently teamed up with the Delaware Humane Society and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to announce their generous \$5,000 reward for anyone who can provide information leading to the arrest of any person involved with animal fighting. By spreading the word about this important campaign, I hope we can eradicate this practice in our communities.

In Washington, I am a member of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus, which has lead many efforts to enact federal animal protection legislation. This May, we celebrated the Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act, which increased the penalty for transporting or engaging in the illegal fighting of animals for sport or entertainment. This law also cracks down on the instruments used to promote animal fights.

Although the passage of this bill was a great success, high profile dogfighting cases have illustrated the need for more severe penalties for this horrific practice. I support H.R. 3327, the Federal Dog Protection Act, which would amend the Animal Welfare Act to prohibit not only the transportation and delivery of animals and materials used for dogfighting but also making it illegal to train and exhibit animals intended for fighting purposes. This bill also seeks to expand the entities of confiscation and enforcement to include any animal control agency, such as the Humane Society, as well as the federal government.

I will continue to support efforts to crackdown on illegal animal fighting, and I urge Delawareans to heed the call from the Humane Society to help eliminate dog fighting. If you have information about illegal animal fighting, please contact your local police department or animal control agency. If the suspected animal fighter is convicted, ask the law enforcement agency involved in the case to write a letter to the Humane Society of the United States to let them know your tip helped lead to the arrest and prosecution of the convicted animal fighter. Your care and attention may prevent the suffering of animals and entitle you to a \$5,000 reward from HSUS! This letter should be sent to the following address:

Animal Fighting Reward
Program

C/O Ann Chynoweth

The Humane Society of the
United States

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