to those responsible for their care—that the care of these animals is something for which they are legally accountable and is an important societal obligation. This message is much more consistent with the purpose of the act than the current message the exclusion of these animals conveys: that the researchers may subject the birds, rats, and mice to cruel and inhumane conditions, that such conduct is sanctioned by the government and has no legal consequences.

The HSUS and co-plaintiffs filed the lawsuit in 1990 after they had exhausted other options. (In the late 1980s, The HSUS and other organizations independently corresponded and met with USDA officials on this issue, to no avail. In 1989 The HSUS and ALDF filed an administrative petition with the agency, seeking an end to the arbitrary exclusion of mice, rats, and birds. The petition was denied—hence the need for the lawsuit.)

While the court’s ruling stops short of explicitly ordering the USDA to begin regulating the care and treatment of mice, rats, and birds, it should have the same effect. The court ordered the USDA to reconsider the agency’s denial of the HSUS/ALDF petition “in light of the interpretation of the law set forth by [this] court.”

Dr. Martin L. Stephens, HSUS vice president, laboratory animals, called the court’s decision “a milestone in the protection of laboratory animals. It’s particularly heartening that mice and rats are getting a break. These unpopular animals are all but overlooked in animal-welfare debates.”

AWA regulations specify minimum standards for the housing and care of animals, as well as administrative procedures that research institutions must follow, such as establishing training programs for laboratory workers. When mice, rats, and birds are covered by the regulations, they will benefit from these standards and procedures. This coverage will have a host of ramifications, including:

- Animal laboratories, schools, or dealers that use or sell only mice, rats, or birds will be subject to AWA regulations for the first time.
- Animal care-and-use committees, which review research proposals, will have to begin scrutinizing all proposals involving mice, rats, or birds.
- Arrogant conditions or treatment of mice, rats, or birds in the laboratory could result in criminal prosecution under the AWA.
- The USDA will begin compiling and publishing year-end statistics on the use and treatment of mice, rats, and birds, yielding a much more comprehensive picture of animal research.
- The USDA has sixty days in which to appeal the court’s ruling. The HSUS hopes that the USDA will accept the ruling and begin protecting the animals the agency has disenfranchised for two decades.

Clockwise from above: (From left to right) K. William Wiseman, chairman of the HSUS board of directors, Patricia Forhan, executive vice president, Phyllis Wright, senior consultant, and Paul G. Irwin, president, enjoy Animal Care Expo ‘92.

Paul G. Irwin welcomes Expo ’92 exhibitors and attendees to Bally’s Casino Resort in Las Vegas.

Trina Romeo of Tuxo-a-Pet explains her company’s services to an attendee in the exhibit hall.

HSUS Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Nina Astenburg (left) admires the Expo ’92 tote bag held by Joe and Maria Kowalczykowski, who came to Las Vegas from New Jersey.

On February 2, 1992, the doors opened on one of the largest animal-care gatherings ever. Instead of five hundred attendees the HSUS staff had hoped for, well over one thousand people participated in the first annual HSUS Animal Care Expo. Animal-care workers, administrators, and exhibitors convened at Bally’s Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada. Expo ’92, the vision of HSUS President Paul G. Irwin, proved to be an exciting, educational venture. “The animal-care community needed a clearinghouse for ideas, resources, and materials,” said Mr. Irwin. “The HSUS had the wherewithal to bring all that together under one roof.”

At the welcoming remarks, HSUS Chief Executive John A. Hoyt officially announced that Mr. Irwin would succeed him as president of The HSUS. Mr. Hoyt also announced that he would step into the role of president of The HSUS’s Humane Society International (see the President’s Perspective).

Mr. Irwin recounted how he had asked Phyllis Wright to be the Animal Care Expo ’92 keynote speaker. Recently retired from the position of HSUS vice president, companion animals, she had responded, “No way. Let Marc Paulhus loose on them!” Ms. Wright has been a primary source of the animal-care and animal-welfare communities for nearly three decades. It was fitting that so many of her prodigies were present when she passed the
torch to Marc Paulhus, the new vice president, companion animals. Mr. Paulhus’s keynote address challenged the audience to find, and pursue, their life’s purpose: 

Your purpose is that most important lifelong theme against which you measure your daily actions. Your purpose should be simple but have broad applications to your everyday choices. Most of all, it should be rather difficult to achieve. The unifying purpose of the animal-care-and-control movement is to promote reverence for life and responsible stewardship.

The address set the tone for the next three days. Although originally envisioned as a trade show, Animal Care Expo ’92 was much more to its attendees. Participants crowded into conference rooms to hear seminars conducted by nationally recognized experts. Sessions offered practical advice on such topics as computers, the use of videotape in cruelty investigations, fundraising, nutritional needs of shelter animals, and animal first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Workshops addressed such ethical issues as cat overpopulation, resources for humane education, and ways to advance animal welfare. Fifty-six classes were held over a three-day period.

One hundred companies dealing in animal-care equipment and resources had booths at the Expo. Two exhibitors brought full-size trucks into the exhibit hall as part of their display of emergency animal-care vehicles. Microchip-identification companies demonstrated how microchips, when implanted beneath the skin of a dog or cat, can provide pertinent information about the animal when an electric “wand” is passed over the pet. Microchip identification may prove to be invaluable in reuniting lost pets with their owners.

An architectural firm displayed work chosen to highlight how animal shelters should be designed with the animals’ well-being in mind, and an architect conducted a workshop on proper shelter design. Such presentations helped animal-care leaders identify means by which they can improve their communities’ assistance to animals.

The HSUS solicited the comments of exhibitors and attendees. The evaluations were overwhelmingly favorable. Especially appreciated were thoughtful critiques that will help The HSUS tailor Animal Care Expo ’93 to the animal-care community.

As the animal-protection movement leads us to a more humane society, it will continually face new challenges. Mr. Paulhus commented in his keynote address, “This movement is about change. ‘Expo’ is about change. And certainly The Humane Society of the United States is changing to meet the challenges of the ’90s.”

Nicholas P. Gilman is The HSUS’s field coordinator, animal sheltering and control.

There will be an Animal Care Expo ’93! Look for details in future HSUS publications.