A legal force for animals

Preventing animal cruelty starts with defining it legally. That’s why we fight for stronger laws at the state and federal levels, and our attorneys work to make sure these laws are upheld and enforced in the courts. With your support, they are reshaping the legal landscape for animals.

You’re Helping Us Pass the First Ever Federal Anti-Cruelty Law. In December, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act, bringing us closer to the day when the nation has a federal anti-cruelty statute that allows the FBI and other federal law enforcement agencies to crack down on malicious cruelty. The legislation still has to pass in the House and be signed by the president.

The PACT Act builds on the federal animal crush video law enacted in 2010, which banned the creation, sale, and distribution of obscene videos that show animals being crushed, burned, drowned, suffocated, impaled, or subjected to other forms of cruelty. The PACT Act will prohibit those same extreme acts of...
animal cruelty when they occur in interstate or foreign commerce, regardless of whether a video is produced; those convicted will face federal felony charges, fines and up to seven years in prison.

The passage of the PACT Act would enable the federal government to prosecute malicious acts of animal cruelty on federal property and would also enable federal authorities to crack down on bestiality, which—like animal fighting and the “crush video” trade—involves a national subculture in which animals are moved across state lines and information is exchanged on websites to enable this exploitation.

**WE’RE FIGHTING TO PROTECT WILD CREATURES—AND YOU’RE THERE WITH US, EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.** We continue to fight against trophy hunting here in the U.S., and against the import of trophies of animals hunted abroad. Through the courts, we blocked the trophy hunting and trapping of wolves again in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, sparing a thousand wolves from cruel death. In California, we successfully helped to defend a state ban on trophy hunting of mountain lions and the importation of mountain lions killed in other states.

**YOU’RE STOPPING ANIMAL EXPLOITATION IN CIRCUSES.** While Ringling Bros. shuttered its operations in 2017, The HSUS continues to fight to end wild animal acts in circuses throughout the United States. Pittsburgh, Santa Fe and Los Angeles became the latest cities to ban such acts and the use of abusive training tools. In August, Illinois became the first state to ban the use of elephants in circuses; New York followed in October. We’re pushing for more state and local laws to prohibit the display of wild animals in circuses and other traveling shows—and to ensure that existing laws are enforced. Some of the biggest successes have come from citizen advo-

**YOU’RE STOPPING PUPPY MILLS—ONE STATE, ONE CITY, ONE COURTROOM AT A TIME.** Mother dogs and their pups suffer in these intensive breeding operations, which churn out dogs with little regard to their wellbeing. As many as 10,000 puppy mills produce more than 2.2 million puppies in the United States each year—many sold in pet stores or over the internet. But we made major strides in stopping puppy mill cruelty in 2017. California became the first state in the nation to ban the sale of puppy mill dogs in pet stores, a tremendous step forward in cutting off a major retail outlet for puppy millers. That law came on the heels of 36 California cities and towns passing local ordinances targeting pet store sales, part of a wave of such local ordinances sweeping the country.

Because of your support, by the close of 2017, 248 localities had taken action to stop puppy mill sales in their communities. The pet industry has fought back with a barrage of state bills to stop these local efforts, as well as lawsuits challenging these laws. But in 2017, The HSUS helped defeat all attempts to reverse this progress, including successfully helping to defend Chicago’s pet store ordinance in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

We’re fighting for consumers, too,
to stop deceptive practices by online puppy sellers, who often present images of healthy, happy dogs to customers who never suspect the disturbing reality behind the websites. An Arizona court cleared the way for pet owners who purchased sick animals from suspected puppy mills to continue their fight against online dog marketplace PuppyFind.

YOU HELPED US EXPAND OUR REACH TO PROTECT ANIMALS AROUND THE WORLD. Humane Society International is leading the fight for stronger laws around the world. Our HSI Mexico team won a major victory when Mexico banned dogfighting nationwide and adopted felony-level penalties for participants and spectators. In Guatemala, the Congress passed sweeping anti-cruelty legislation, including a dogfighting ban, a prohibition on tail- and ear-docking of farm animals and a ban on cosmetic testing on animals. The law creates the first-ever government entity in Central America dealing specifically with animal cruelty.

The Indian government announced sweeping new regulations that are expected to reduce the suffering of dogs bred indiscriminately and without basic needs like food, water and shelter; improve conditions for animals sold in livestock markets; and ensure that fish sold in aquariums and fish stores are not caught using destructive fishing practices or taken from protected areas. Our HSI India team also persuaded authorities to ban the import of the skins of exotic animals and furs into the country. The Nepalese Supreme Court banned all public culls of street dogs using poisons, beating and shooting, and directed the Nepalese government to introduce a nationwide humane management plan for homeless animals. Compassion for animals transcends geographic boundaries, and you are helping us advocate for animals in more corners of the world than ever before.

WE ENGAGE THE PUBLIC ON ANIMAL ISSUES, seeking to broaden societal respect and compassion for animals. We seek greater media coverage for animal protection issues, train animal protection professionals and engage volunteers around the world, partnering with organizations and individuals to increase our impact.

2.6 million Facebook followers

Our Facebook community grew to 2.6 million, more than 800,000 followers on Twitter and more than 240,000 on Instagram. Videos of our work on Facebook and YouTube garnered over 116 million views. Our magazine, All Animals, hit a circulation of more than 580,000, and our blog, A Humane Nation, gained 2.1 million page views. More than 29,500 print and online articles featured The HSUS and its affiliates, more than 300 of them in major newspapers.

OUR NATIONAL VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM engaged help from more than 2,200 volunteers around the country, who contributed more than 135,000 hours of work. The HSUS hosted Humane Lobby Day events in 34 states, with over 1,500 advocates in attendance.

OUR STATE COUNCIL PROGRAM now has 353 members active in 42 states, and our District Leader Program has 623 leaders active in 308 congressional districts. We also established two more state Agriculture Advisory Councils, bringing our total to 14.

More than 5,000 trained

Our Law Enforcement Outreach and Humane State teams trained more than 5,000 law enforcement officers, prosecutors and shelter and rescue personnel and volunteers across the country. Our Faith Outreach Program promoted hundreds of volunteer actions and organized presentations at Diocesan conventions, divinity schools and churches nationwide. More than 2,000 shelter and rescue group representatives attended Animal Care Expo for training and networking opportunities.

OUR HUMANE SOCIETY VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION reached approximately 2,000 vet students, providing service opportunities such as our Rural Area Veterinary Services (RAVS) program. RAVS provided services to over 9,000 animals and training for hundreds of veterinary students. Our Pets for Life team provided services to pet owners in underserved communities, helping more than 150,000 pets in our core and mentorship cities—including more than 95,000 spay/neuters.