

As 2020 Arrives, So Many Urgent Issues Command Our Urgent Action

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 31, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- By Wayne Pacelle

It's an axiom of our age that the pace of change is breakneck. When I started college in the 1980s, I completed my papers using a typewriter, but by the end, those machines were in the closet attracting dust bunnies. PCs claimed their former territory on our work desks and cubicles. The internet was once a futuristic concept, but almost overnight, search became a central way to gather information at work and at home. Smart phones killed off the rotary phone, palm pilot and the flip phone and gave us access to websites, maps, language lessons, books, podcasts, music, and videos at the touch of a finger.



Ivory from Elephant Tusks is Commonly Trafficked

The world is also changing when it comes to animals. Tomorrow, Pasadena, California hosts the Rose Bowl parade before the game between Oregon and Wisconsin. A century or so ago, the Rose Bowl parade drew fans by conducting chariot races. Parade organizers also had a competition between elephants and camels, and even an ostrich race.

Tomorrow, on the day of the Rose Bowl, California's ban on the use of wild animals in circuses takes effect. A ban on all forms of fur trapping for recreation or commerce goes into force there, closing that state's centuries-long chapter involving the fur trade. Times change.

But the changes aren't just happening in California. Macy's and Bloomingdale's have been running print ads in the New York Times announcing they are getting out of the fur business and selling their inventory at bargain-basement rates. Who would have thought that the once-ubiquitous fur ads in newspapers around the holidays would evolve into major retailers announcing a fire sale to prepare for the closure of their salons?

But none of this change is self-executing. It comes through human agency. Raising issues, gathering the facts, making logical arguments, pressuring companies or politicians, and pointing to a new way forward, for us as individuals and for the whole of society.

That's where Animal Wellness Action, founded in April 2018, comes in. Any serious-minded social movement must have a sophisticated political arm that turns ideas into policy and gets involved in elections for candidates and issues. As we turn into 2020, Animal Wellness Action, allied with its sister organization the Animal Wellness Foundation, will have a Political Action Committee, a team of lobbyists on Capitol Hill, a growing set of state directors, a National Law Enforcement

Council, a Veterinary Council, and a growing International Program.

- We are passing new laws to stop cruelty at the federal level. The House and Senate passed the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act to establish a national anti-cruelty law for the first time, and President Trump signed it a month ago. Public Law 116-72 is a milestone for our movement. In July, AWA led the fight on the House floor to pass the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act to stop this form of horse abuse by a vote of 333–96. We led efforts to secure 290+ cosponsors for PAST and PACT, activating a new House rule that triggers automatic floor action.

- We are on the cusp of passing other major animal protection measures. The House passed the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act on November 20th by a vote of 310 – 107. We've pushing hard to pass the Horseracing Integrity Act (to ban race-day doping of horses), the Big Cat Public Safety Act (to stop cub petting and the use of big cats as pets), and the Safeguard American Food Exports Act (to ban horse slaughter), and we expect action on all of these bills.

- We are working to enforce laws against animal cruelty. We won a provision in the end-of-year spending bill to provide \$2 million in 2020 to implement the Pet and Women Safety Act. AWA conceived of and won a U.S. House amendment to seek \$2 million for an "animal cruelty crimes" unit at the Department of Justice (DOJ). That provision didn't make it into the final bill, but language to compel DOJ to step up enforcement did, and we'll keep at it. We're bringing that same resolve to the effort to get USDA to turn around its sporadic and deficient efforts to enforce the Animal Welfare Act.

- We are focused on ending animal fighting everywhere. AWA in 2018 led the fight to upgrade federal animal fighting to stop cockfighting and dogfighting and is working to compel enforcement of the fighting ban in the five U.S. territories. That ban has been upheld in federal court, and it took effect on December 20th. Especially in Puerto Rico, cockfighters and their political allies are disregarding the law and continuing to stage fights. Seeing that the rule of law is enforced will be one of our top priorities in 2020.

- We are stopping greyhound racing in its tracks. With GREY2K USA Worldwide, we worked to win a phase-out of greyhound racing by 2022 in Arkansas. We are supporting Grey2K USA in similar efforts in West Virginia, and all of this is a follow up to a successful collaboration with that group to pass Amendment 13 in Florida to shut down the 12 tracks in that state by the end of 2020. Florida was the hub of the industry, with two-thirds of all the tracks in the nation.

- We are fighting wildlife trafficking and trophy hunting. We lobbied to pass the Rescuing Animals With Rewards Act, which President Trump signed into law just days ago. We are also campaigning to stop imports of sport-hunted trophies of elephants, lions, and other threatened and endangered species. And we are working to restore Botswana's ban on trophy hunting of elephants, lions, and other wildlife.

- We are stopping contest killing. With Project Coyote and other wildlife protection groups, we were instrumental in securing a contest killing ban in Arizona in 2019. This is a campaign we are intent on pushing to all other states that allow these mass killing spectacles.

- We are Putting Animals Into Presidential Politics. AWA has developed a national platform on animal protection as a guiding document for the major presidential candidates to endorse as they run for president. Julian Castro, Cory Booker, and Marianne Williamson have issued detailed statements on animal welfare. President Trump himself just announced a petition he's launched against animal cruelty. It's an amazing moment when leading candidates in both parties, even if their records are imperfect or far from it, see the political benefit in associating with animal protection.

- We are ousting anti-animal politicians. Last year, AWA helped defeat two virulently anti-animal lawmakers in Texas and California. In 2020, we'll take a strategic approach to elections again and

support candidates and legislators espousing support for animals -- and calling out lawmakers who stand in the way.

We are doing this work with a highly unusual degree of efficiency and fiscal responsibility. With no professional fundraisers and very limited overhead (shared office space, and very limited administrative staff), we spend 90 percent of monies on programs and less than 10 percent on administration and fundraising.

Today, we look back and wonder how people could have had chariot races and elephant spectacles at a Rose Bowl celebration. Future generations will shake their heads at the idea of people draping themselves in fur or slipping on athletic shoes made from the hides of kangaroo. They'll wonder how politicians or regulators could allow people to keep captive lions or tigers in backyard cages or stand aside allowing cockfights, wildlife killing contests or trophy imports of rare species. And they won't understand the confinement of animals raised for food in cages and crates so small they cannot turn around, or the killing wolves, lions and other predators, or the allowance of exotic animals like cows to degrade our public lands.

We know you'll fight for these changes to transform society for the better, and we're grateful to stand shoulder to shoulder with you. In the face of these life-threatening problems for animals, we cannot be bystanders. We know you share our view that helping animals helps us all.

Animal Wellness Action is helping animals by promoting legal standards preventing cruelty. You can help animals by [making a donation today](#).

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

Marty Irby
ANIMAL WELLNESS ACTION
2028215686

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases. © 1995-2020 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.