The Animals’ Advocate

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Positioned at the nexus of animal protection and the legal system, the Animal Legal Defense Fund’s work not only helps animals, but defends the rights of compassionate people as well.

Ag-Gag laws – which penalize whistleblowers and undercover activists who seek to document cruelty – improperly restrict our First Amendment rights. With your help, the Animal Legal Defense Fund has taken on these unjust and unconstitutional laws as they’ve popped up in states across the U.S.

Ag-Gag laws are aimed first and foremost at keeping the public from learning about the cruelty intrinsic to the factory farming industry, but some are worded so broadly that they could also be used to silence, for example, an employee seeking to blow the whistle on abuse at an assisted-living facility or a school.

It’s clear that these laws hurt both animals and humans – by keeping animals suffering in silence, and by suppressing truthful speech from individuals of conscience.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund has achieved a string of victories against Ag-Gag laws – including a major win in North Carolina in June – and we are currently active combating Ag-Gag laws in Kansas, Iowa, and Arkansas.

Your support is powering this work to protect animals from abuse, expose the truth about cruelty at factory farms and slaughterhouses, and protect whistleblowers and animal advocates who document the abuses the factory farming industry would prefer to hide.

Thank you for all you do to stand for animals and against cruelty.
More than nine billion land animals are killed in U.S. slaughterhouses each year — and almost all of them are raised on factory farms. These animals face not only a traumatic death, but cruel conditions throughout their lives.

Fighting a Harmful Drug
Animals on factory farms endure routine mutilations such as tail docking and debeaking; stressful confinement that prevents them from performing natural behaviors; and harmful breeding and medicating practices that leave them with significant health issues.

One such practice involves the use of a class of drugs called beta-agonists — ractopamine is one of these drugs. Beta-agonists increase muscle mass in the months before slaughter. They cause tremors, lesions, and stress, and have been linked to increased incidents of “downed” pigs — those who arrive at slaughter unable to walk. Ractopamine is banned in most countries and has been linked to human health concerns.

With your support, the Animal Legal Defense Fund took action, filing an emergency petition with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to suspend its approval of ractopamine.

Learn more at aldf.org/fda.

Preventing the Next Pandemic
Factory farming has always been a risky practice, but the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown its dangers into sharp relief. Like COVID-19, three-quarters of all new infectious diseases over the past decade have been zoonotic, meaning able to jump from animal to human. While so-called “wet markets” have grabbed headlines during the pandemic, factory farming is every bit as risky from a global health perspective. That’s why the Animal Legal Defense Fund has produced a series of policy recommendations, educational reporting, and expert webinars to help citizens and policymakers create much-needed change — and your support makes this work possible.

Learn more at aldf.org/covid.

Taking Action Against Factory Farm Abuses
More than 41,000 workers in the animal agriculture industry have tested positive for COVID-19 in the U.S. Though agribusiness companies have sought to deflect blame and pressure their employees to keep working through the crisis, they’ve been unable to avoid a slowdown at slaughter facilities and meatpacking plants.

Amid this slowdown, factory farms have engaged in “depopulation” — the mass killing of animals. Animals such as pigs and chickens have been killed by the millions, using methods that are inhumane but nonetheless allowed under current regulations.

With your help, the Animal Legal Defense Fund filed an emergency petition with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, urging the agency to prevent COVID-19 relief funds from subsidizing the cruelest methods of depopulation — ventilation shutdown and suffocation by water-based foam — and withhold COVID-19 relief funds from companies that use these methods.

When workers witness depopulation and other industry abuses, they may fear that speaking out could cost them their jobs. That’s why the Animal Legal Defense Fund created an online tip portal, ReportAnimalAg.com, that allows workers to anonymously report incidents of depopulation, health and safety issues, and other concerns. Next, we spread the word by placing billboards near major animal agriculture facilities around the country. Your support enables this critical work to protect animals from cruelty and stand up for people harmed by the irresponsible factory farming industry.

Learn more at aldf.org/workers.

North Carolina’s Ag-Gag Law Struck Down

Courts continue to strike down Ag-Gag laws, laws that “gag” would-be whistleblowers and undercover activists by punishing them for recording footage of what goes on in animal agriculture, across the country. On June 12, 2020, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina ruled North Carolina’s Ag-Gag law is unconstitutional following a lawsuit filed by a coalition of public interest groups including the Animal Legal Defense Fund. The decision is the fifth victory against Ag-Gag laws following successful lawsuits in Kansas, Idaho, Iowa, and Utah. Litigation is pending in Arkansas.

Learn more at aldf.org/aggag.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund filed a federal lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a North Carolina law designed to deter whistleblowers and undercover investigators from publicizing information about corporate misconduct. Learn more at aldf.org/aggag.
When animals are subjected to cruelty, the Animal Legal Defense Fund is their staunch defender. But when the abuser is unknown, a reward can be the critical element in ensuring the victim receives justice.

That’s why the Animal Legal Defense Fund has offered rewards in cases like that of Ladybell, a senior dog who was abandoned and stabbed in Washington, D.C. (fortunately, her condition has stabilized following emergency surgery); Timmy the turtle and Billy the rabbit, who were shot with a crossbow in Massachusetts (Timmy is expected to make a full recovery at a rescue center, while Billy unfortunately ran away before care could be rendered); and two wild dolphins who were shot and killed in Florida.

These cases are not only heartbreaking — they also serve to remind us of “The Link,” the well-documented connection between cruelty to animals and cruelty to humans.

Animal Legal Defense Fund Executive Director Stephen Wells puts it best: “People who hurt animals don’t stop with animals.” At the Animal Legal Defense Fund, we believe that offering rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of animal abusers can prevent future harm to animals and humans alike. Your support enables this powerful tool in the prevention of cruelty.

Learn more at aldf.org/rewards.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund recently scored two legal victories against the puppy mill industry. At the end of June, we reached a settlement agreement with Animal Kingdom pet store over a puppy laundering scheme designed to exploit a loophole in California’s landmark retail pet sale ban. In 2017, California became the first state to ban the retail sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits from commercial breeders. Despite the law, Animal Kingdom continued sourcing young purebred and designer puppies from sham “rescue groups” and selling them for thousands of dollars. As part of the settlement, the pet store committed to no longer selling animals from groups operating as fronts for commercial breeding operations. The lawsuit continues against the “rescue groups” that worked with Animal Kingdom — Bark Adoptions and Rescue Pets Iowa.

Also in June, a court found the owner of a puppy mill — California Carolina Dogs — in Vallejo, California, had violated a state law protecting dogs used for breeding following a lawsuit filed by the Animal Legal Defense Fund. For years, neighbors complained about foul odors and unsanitary breeding conditions. At one point, a local agency documented the breeder keeping as many as 50 dogs at the property. We are now seeking a permanent injunction to rescue any dogs that still remain at the location.

Learn more at aldf.org/puppymill.

In 2018, San Francisco banned the sale of fur products in an effort to prevent animal cruelty and protect the environment from the destructive fur industry. After the International Fur Trade Federation filed a lawsuit challenging the ordinance’s constitutionality, the Animal Legal Defense Fund and The Humane Society of the United States intervened to defend the law. In July 2020, a court ruled that the law does not violate the Constitution’s Commerce Clause.

San Francisco was the first major city to ban fur sales, following ordinances in California cities West Hollywood and Berkeley. In 2019, California made history by banning fur sales throughout the state. The court decision marks a critical early victory as more municipalities across the country consider banning cruel fur products.

Go to aldf.org/fur to read more.
You might call Kim Allegretti a renaissance woman. A board member of the Fred & Jean Allegretti Foundation, Kim has also been an attorney, a judge, the owner of a coffee and yarn shop, a foundation administrator, and a tour operator to Italy. While her career has been a varied one, a constant throughout her life has been her passion for helping animals.

Kim — who lives in Denver with her husband, Jim Galloway, rescue dog Augustus, and feline trio Josie, Sammie, and Nala — recalls that animal protection was always a priority in her family growing up. Her mother, Carol — also a longtime board member of the Fred & Jean Allegretti Foundation — has made standing up for animals a focus of both her home life and her philanthropic work. Kim has followed in both traditions, furthering her family’s legacy of philanthropic care for animals and working to instill the value of compassion for animals to her son, now a college student, and three beloved foreign-exchange students whom she considers her daughters. The family is also passionate about companion animal rescue and supporting causes that support the human-animal bond.

With her dedication to helping animals and her firsthand knowledge of the power of the law to make a difference, supporting the Animal Legal Defense Fund was a natural choice for Kim.

“There are a lot of animal advocacy groups focused on rescuing abused animals and this is important work, but only by also improving the laws that impact animals and protect them from cruelty can we effect more long-lasting change. Additionally, it is not enough to merely advocate for changes in legislation and then fail to follow through and make sure the laws are enforced. The work that the Animal Legal Defense Fund does to strategically litigate cases to establish important legal precedents regarding animal rights is critical to the work of trying to secure a safer and more humane future for all animals, whether they are captive, used in research, born in puppy mills, raised in agricultural settings, or otherwise.”

To learn about ways that you can support the Animal Legal Defense Fund, visit aldf.org/support.