



the
**Animal Activist
Legal Defense**
project

*EXPERT WITNESSES IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY
ALDF ANIMAL LAW SYMPOSIUM
MAY 8, 2026*



Keeping animals and activists out of cages

CRIMINAL DEFENSE - FIRST AMENDMENT LITIGATION - INVESTIGATION AND WHISTLEBLOWER
DEFENSE
AND MORE

aaldp



Why Experts?

I THINK THE VETERINARIAN WAS PROBABLY THE BEST WITNESS, IN MY OPINION. THE JUDGE ALLOWED HER TO BE CONSIDERED AN EXPERT WITNESS.

I THINK WE ALL PRETTY MUCH RESPECTED THE JUDGE. SO WHEN HE ALLOWED HER TO BE AN EXPERT WITNESS THAT CARRIED A LOT OF WEIGHT WITH US. HER OPINION CARRIED A LOT OF WEIGHT.

BUT ALSO, SOMETIMES YOU HAVE PEOPLE WHO ARE REALLY INTELLIGENT BUT THEY LACK IN SOCIAL SKILLS, BUT SHE WAS ABLE TO EXPLAIN THINGS IN MORE SIMPLIFIED, LAYMAN'S TERMS THAT WE COULD UNDERSTAND. AND THAT WAS JUST EXTREMELY HELPFUL. SHE WAS SO EASY TO UNDERSTAND, AND YOU COULD TELL THAT SHE REALLY KNEW HER STUFF. HER BACKGROUND IN TRYING TO CHANGE POLICIES AND LEGISLATION – I THINK SHE CARRIED THE MOST WEIGHT OUT OF ALL THE WITNESSES.

FOSTER FARMS RESCUE JUROR



Ridglan Farms



DR. SHERSTIN ROSENBERG, DVM

What do you want to explain?

Testimonial Statement

Dr. Elena T. Contreras, DVM, MS, PhD
Resident, American College of Animal Welfare
Veterinarian and Associate Professor, Animal Welfare and Behavior at Shreiber School of Veterinary
Medicine of Rowan University¹

April 15, 2025

This statement reflects my professional evaluation as a veterinarian trained in animal welfare assessment, with a special interest in poultry welfare and considerable veterinary and rehabilitation experience with the Cornish-cross “broiler” breed chicken. The primary focus of this evaluation is the health and welfare of the chickens rescued from Perdue’s Petaluma Poultry (“broiler”) facilities in June 2023 and the relationship of their conditions to the facility’s general practices including those at the slaughterhouse. My evaluation is informed by the following materials provided to me by Ms. Rosenberg’s attorney: medical records, video footage, photographs, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) reports, condemnation certificates, and memorandums of interviews.

Overall, the chickens obtained on June 13, 2023 were in poor physical health, and their welfare was significantly compromised. Despite their intended purpose for slaughter, appropriate standards for health and welfare should still have been maintained both prior to and during the slaughter process; however, these fundamental standards appear not to have been met.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND CRUELTY

June 6, 2023

Re: Legal Opinion Regarding the Right to Rescue and
the Use of the Affirmative Defense of Necessity In
the Context of "Open Rescue" and Other Forms of
Intervention to Protect Animals

LEGAL RIGHTS TO RESCUE

Dear Mr. Carraway:

You have asked me to opine on the likelihood of enforcement of criminal animal cruelty law or any laws related to animal treatment vis-à-vis an animal in a commercial setting, particularly in the state of California. Please see my analysis herein:

Qualifications

My name is Cheryl Leahy, and I am an attorney who specializes in animal law. I have over 19
LACK OF ANIMAL CRUELTY ENFORCEMENT





Thank you!

Chris Carraway

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