

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 27, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition
and Forestry
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition
and Forestry
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

As you begin the conference on the Farm Bill, we urge you to include a provision – Subtitle F, Sec. 11616 – which mirrors the Parity in Animal Cruelty Enforcement (PACE) Act, S. 2971/H.R. 4202, and was adopted in the House version of the Farm Bill following an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 359-51. The PACE provision would clarify that federal prohibitions on animal fighting activity in or affecting interstate commerce are to be consistently applied in all U.S. jurisdictions including the U.S. territories.

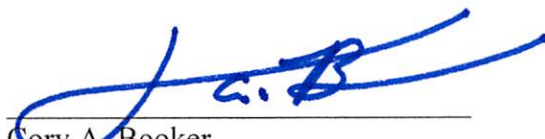
Animal fighting is a cruel activity that pits animals against each other, with animals often drugged to heighten their aggression and forced to keep fighting even after they've suffered grievous injuries such as broken bones, deep gashes, punctured lungs and pierced eyes. Animal fighting is also often associated with other illegal activities, such as gangs, drug trafficking, illegal weapons dealing, public corruption and other violent crimes including homicide.


In recent years, Congress has strengthened the federal animal fighting law on multiple occasions, including amendments in each of the previous three Farm Bills enacted in 2002, 2008, and 2014. It is now a felony to sponsor or exhibit an animal in an animal fighting venture; buy, sell, deliver, possess, train or transport an animal for fighting purposes; use the U.S. Postal Service to promote animal fighting; buy, sell, deliver, or transport cockfighting implements; and bring a minor to an animal fight; and it is a misdemeanor to be a spectator at a staged animal fight.

The PACE provision will simply remove language in the law that has created confusion about the applicability in the U.S. territories of some of these prohibitions. We respectfully request that Sec. 11616 be included in the final Farm Bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



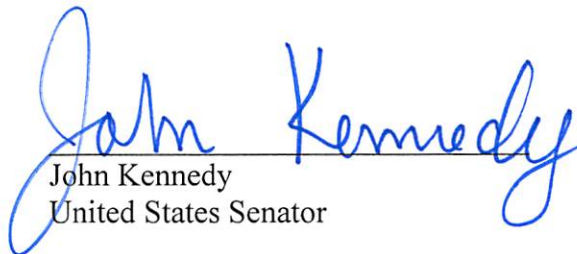
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Dean Heller
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



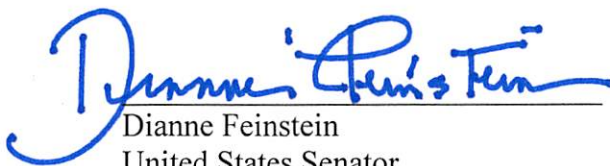
John Kennedy
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



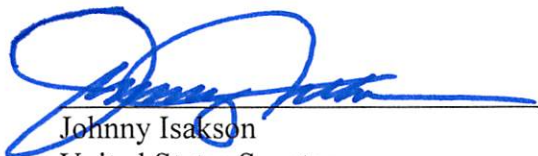
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



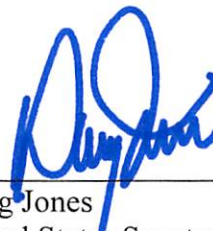
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Doug Jones
United States Senator