WARNINGS ON TUNA LABELS

Momentum continued to build in support of Rep. Barbara Boxer's bill, H.R. 2926, the Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act, which would require tuna producers to label their products to indicate whether dolphins were killed in the process of catching tuna. The bill would enable consumers to differentiate between "dolphin-safe" and "dolphin-deadly" products. The House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee's Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment held hearings on the bill in October, when testimony on behalf of a number of organizations, including The HSUS, was presented in its support. We urge you to thank House Subcommittee Chairman Gerry Studds for holding hearings and request that he approve the bill and send it to the full committee without further delay. Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware has announced his intentions of introducing the bill in the Senate. Urge senators to become one of the original cosponsors of this bill even before it is introduced.

REVIEWSING ANIMAL PATENTS

As legislators wrapped up the first session of the One-hundred and First Congress, The HSUS continued testifying and shaping legislation to foster greater animal protection. In September, The HSUS strongly confirmed its support for legislation introduced by Rep. Benjamin Cardin of Maryland when HSUS President John A. Hoyt testified at a hearing before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Administration of Justice. The Cardin bill, H.R. 3247, would provide for a moratorium on the patenting of animal life until there is a proper regulatory review and approval process in place. President Hoyt called on the Subcommittee to approve Rep. Cardin's bill. Since no further action has been taken by the Subcommittee, it is of the utmost importance that you contact your representative to ask him or her to co-sponsor H.R. 3247 and to request chairman Robert Kas tenmeier to approve the bill and send it to the full House Judiciary Committee. Please also ask your senators to support a moratorium in the Senate.

SENATE HEARINGS ON LD-50 TEST

In early November, Dr. Martin Stephens, director of the laboratory animals division of The HSUS, testified before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation's Consumer Subcommittee on behalf of Sen. Harry Reid's bill, S. 891, the Consumer Products Safe Testing Act. The legislation would prohibit federal-agency use of test results from the LD-50 Test and require that federal agencies review biennially other animal tests currently in use. Dr. Stephens stressed that the LD-50 Test is not only inhumane but also outdated, inasmuch as there are alternative tests already available that use fewer animals. This hearing marked the first time the Senate has reviewed the Consumer Products Safe Testing Act.

TSONGAS ON ALTERNATIVES

Former U.S. senator Paul Tsongas went before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Research, and Foreign Agriculture in October to discuss the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Appearing on behalf of The HSUS and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, he told subcommittee members that the congressional mandate to require retesting of all chemicals under FIFRA within nine years, as is now required by law, will be virtually impossible to carry out unless a battery of short-term alternatives to laboratory animal tests is used for initial screening of chemicals. Subcommittee Chairman George Brown of California reiterated his strong interest in the use of alternative tests and was responsive to Sen. Tsongas's suggestion of a visit to the Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing, which is actively engaged in research on developing alternatives to laboratory animal testing.
TAXING HUMANE SOCIETIES

The House Ways and Means Committee has sidestepped debate over whether to reform the Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT), which threatened to place a tax on the revenues received by charitable animal hospitals and humane societies from certain medical services performed on animals. For the time being, the committee has decided to refer the proposal back to the U.S. Treasury Department for its advice. The HSUS sent a lengthy letter to the Treasury Department outlining concerns for revisions in UBIT, urging instead that previous Internal Revenue Service rulings that foster the ongoing work of humane societies and charitable animal hospitals be formalized.

HOUSE STALLS ON VEAL BILL

The proposed Veal Calf Protection Act, H.R. 84, introduced by Rep. Charles Bennett of Florida, continued to gain cosponsors. Currently, more than eighty members of the House are on record as supporting the bill. But Chairman Charles Stenholm of the House Agriculture Committee’s Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Subcommittee has yet to schedule a session to review the bill and send it to the full committee. Please write your legislator to encourage him or her to cosponsor H.R. 84, which would provide minimum space requirements for veal calves, and to ask Subcommittee Chairman Stenholm to review the bill at the earliest possible date. Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada plans to introduce a similar veal-calf protection bill in the Senate soon.

Meanwhile, there is encouraging news from California, where chef and restaurant owner Wolfgang Puck announced he will serve only naturally raised veal from farms in Virginia and northern California. Chef Puck, of the world-famous Spago restaurant, has taken this action because of customers’ inquiries and his concern about potential health risks to consumers from traditional, formula-fed, crate-reared veal. The HSUS’s department of government relations is interested in news of other restaurants that serve only humanely raised veal.
UTHAN FOR WHALES AND WOLVES

Utah may not have many whales, but it does have an articulate whale advocate in Rep. Wayne Owens. Rep. Owens recently chaired the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs' General Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearings on marine mammals. He pledged to review current laws to make sure they offer maximum protection to these endangered mammals. Rep. Owens is also the sponsor of H.R. 2786, which calls for an analysis of all factors relating to the reintroduction of gray wolves into Yellowstone National Park. We urge you to have your representative support his efforts in both issues.

PREVENT-A-LITTER MONTH


The gray wolf may be returned to Yellowstone National Park if Congress passes H.R. 2786, which calls for an analysis of the impact of such an action.

Sens. Alan Cranston of California and Robert Dole of Kansas have introduced the Senate version, S.J.Res. 229. Passage of this resolution would call attention to the nationwide crisis of pet overpopulation, promote responsible pet ownership, and focus on the primary solution to the problem—the spaying and neutering of pet dogs and cats. The HSUS will be working very hard to get the resolution passed, but we must act quickly. The bill needs 218 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 51 cosponsors in the Senate before the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee will even consider the resolutions. Since the Senate Judiciary Committee meets to consider resolutions in February and does not focus on them again until June, please ask your representatives and senators to become cosponsors of the resolution as soon as possible. The following format may be helpful:

Dear Representative/Senator:


REP. ROSE'S TWO BILLS

In the wake of the congressional focus on whether a specific federal law is needed to address limited instances of laboratory break-ins, Rep. Charlie Rose of North Carolina has taken an innovative approach. His bill H.R. 3223, the Animal Welfare Improvements Act of 1989, would protect laboratories and farm-animal facilities from violent activities such as vandalism and theft, but it would also protect whistleblowers from prosecution if they are found to have uncovered violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) in the course of trespassing or committing other violations. This bill also incorporates another bill, H.R. 2345, which The HSUS supports. H.R. 2345 would permit private lawsuits against the United States Department of Agriculture on behalf of a person or on behalf of any animal protected by the AWA to ensure proper enforcement of the AWA. The Rose bills, H.R. 2345 and H.R. 3223, should have your representative’s immediate support. Please urge him or her to join the list of cosponsors.

DO YOUR LETTERS COUNT?

Do your cards and letters really make a difference in urging a legislator's support of a bill? According to Rep. Lee Hamilton, a senior Congressman from Indiana, they have a tremendous impact. In a recent item in the Congressional Record he noted: As the volume of mail grows, citizens need not fear that their message will be drowned out. Mail remains a very important way for a member of Congress to stay aware of concerns in the district. Correspondence between citizens and legislators remains one of the cornerstones of our democracy. Constituents who understand how this relationship works can give their words maximum impact.

Please note: letters to senators should be addressed: The Honorable ________, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Letters to representatives should be addressed: The Honorable ________, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.