Speaker of the House Thomas Foley administers the oath of the House to new members of Congress in January. While two-thirds of all listed species, for example, (in a recent settlement of a lawsuit filed by the Fund for Animals and others, the Department of the Interior agreed to accelerate the listing process for threatened and endangered species under the ESA.)

Increased funding is essential for full implementation of the ESA. Reauthorization is likely to be extremely controversial, as environmental and economic considerations are debated. Rep. Gerry Studds is expected to introduce reauthorization legislation similar to a bill he sponsored in the previous Congress (H.R. 4045). We expect to support his approach, which would strongly promote the species recovery aspects of the ESA. We will continue to work with the Endangered Species Coalition, a broadly based group of animal-protection and environmental organizations dedicated to preserving and strengthening the ESA.

The USFS is focusing on obtaining appropriations for several ongoing federal programs. We will ask Congress for increased funds for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the areas of research into non-lethal methods of animal damage control, enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act, and continued development of plans to implement the Organics Foods Production Act. The USFS will also seek additional funds for the National Institutes of Health's National Toxicology Program, which is directed to explore alternatives to the use of animals in research.

The USFS recently spoke with Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada regarding appropriations for the wild-horse immunocontraception program (see the article on page 5). We plan to testify before Congress on this issue and are optimistic about obtaining enough funds for full implementation of the program.

Congress will consider important new and reintroduced legislation in the coming months. The USFS was pleased that on January 25 Rep. Gary Ackerman of New York reintroduced his legislation prohibiting the sale of "downed" animals at livestock markets (H.R. 559); Sen. Daniel Akaka of Hawaii expected to reintroduce the Senate version of the bill in February. ("Downers" are animals that are too sick, weak, or crippled to walk, unassisted.) The HSUS testified before Congress on "downers" last year, and we will continue to press for passage of the legislation this year.

We expect that Rep. Ben Cardin of Maryland will reintroduce the Poppy Protection Act, a proposed "lemon law" that would allow consumers to recover veterinary costs if they purchase a sick animal from a pet shop.

We are also supporting resolutions in Congress calling on the United States to continue opposing the resumption of commercial whaling. At last year's meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), Norway announced that it recommenced commercial whaling, violating the international moratorium on the IWC's moratorium since 1986. The HSUS is concerned that some countries will press Norway to join the moratorium at this year's meeting, to be held in Japan in May. The resolution states that "the United States should make the fullest use of diplomatic channels [and] appropriate domestic and international law" to advocate the conservation of whale species. It also calls on the United States to work toward a moratorium on the direct commercial harvest of dolphins and porpoises.

HSUS/HSI has launched a campaign of Norwegian fish, cheese, and petroleum products; we ask our members to use these buying power to keep Norway out of the whaling business.