

The Honorable Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives; Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Senators \_\_\_\_\_  
The U.S. Senate, U.S. Capitol Building; Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_ and

Senators \_\_\_\_\_:

I am a registered voter who, like two-thirds of Americans, "supports passing strict laws concerning the treatment of farm animals," (2003 Gallup poll).

I write to inquire about your stance on of the **Farm Animal Stewardship Act, H.R. 1726**, introduced by Congressmen Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) and Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) on March 28, 2007. This model bill bars the USDA from buying meat, milk and eggs for federal programs unless manufacturers abide by specific animal welfare criterion.

H.R. 1726 requires USDA-purchased goods to come from animals permitted to turn, stretch limbs — and basically move — among other stipulations. Since the federal government annually acquires over \$1 billion in animal products, this legislation could enhance the lives of millions of animals confined on U.S. factory farms.

I respectfully ask my Representative to cosponsor the Farm Animal Stewardship Purchasing Act. I urge my Senators to initiate a companion bill to H.R. 1726 in the U.S. Senate.

I find it unacceptable that billions of animals are slaughtered each year, yet the government fails to protect them while on farms. Currently, many egg producers starve birds in 10-14 day cycles to boost egg output. Birds lose up to 35% of their weight and are predisposed to Salmonella enteritidis infections. In fact, forced molting is implicated in the epidemic of foodborne illnesses.

Battery-hen farms typically pack six to nine hens inside wire coops no larger than a filing drawer. Birds cannot flutter a wing or extend a leg. "Broiler chickens" are overcrowded inside windowless grower houses. To curtail fighting and cannibalism, workers amputate the bottom third of each bird's beak.

Hog factories warehouse 600-pound sows in metal gestation stalls for a motionless life atop cement slats. Dairy plants restrain cows in concrete encased feedlots. Veal calves, chained by the neck inside two-foot-wide crates, are unable to shift positions, flex their legs or lie down with ease.

To create foie gras, ducks and geese are force-fed through metal tubes lodged in their throats. Most suffer from punctured throats, hideously swollen livers and exploding stomachs.

These animals receive no veterinary care. Downer animals, those too ill or disabled to stand, require swift and humane euthanasia. Yet non-ambulatory animals are shocked, beaten and dragged with chains and bulldozers. An estimated 90% of downers are preventable with improved care and handling. This is all the more reason to back legislation that inhibits severe animal confinement.

I find it unacceptable that our nation slaughters billions of animals each year, yet fails to protect them under federal law while on farms. I look forward to your feedback on this important bill.

Sincerely,