

Protecting Animals in Pennsylvania

Animal Protection Caucus - Pennsylvania

2025 End of Year Summary

Legislative wins bring hope and opportunity for animal welfare advances

2025 was a banner year for animals in Pennsylvania, marked by major progress on critical animal welfare initiatives.

Beagles and bagels

The Beagles and Bagels event at the Pennsylvania State Capitol was a tremendous success! We raised awareness about the Beagle Bill (Senate Bill 381), state legislation that would help protect dogs and cats used in experiments. We are grateful to Senator Doug Mastriano (R-33), Senator Carolyn Comitta (D-19), Representative Ryan Bizzarro (D-3), Animal Protection Caucus chair Senator Nick Piscottano (D-45), Miss Central Pennsylvania 2025 Madelyn Rowan, and the many shelter partners, volunteers, and families who worked with us to champion this critical bill. Collectively, we helped educate people about dogs and cats in laboratories, not just at this event, but at beagle reunions and pet expositions across the state!

Special investigation – exposing a thriving market for ivory

Humane World for Animals hosted a powerful press event, unveiling the results of our undercover investigation that identified 383 ivory items for sale throughout Pennsylvania. We've led lobbying efforts in support of House Bill 994, a bill that would limit in-state sales of ivory and parts and products from other imperiled species. By closing the Commonwealth's markets to these items, HB 994 helps ensure our state does not contribute to the global wildlife trafficking crisis. A special thank you to House sponsor Representative Leanne Krueger (D-161) for her leadership in protecting imperiled wildlife. We are also grateful to Judiciary Chairman Tim Briggs (D-149) for bringing the bill up for a committee vote. The bill has passed the full House and still awaits a vote in the Senate. And a heartfelt thanks to Representative Melissa Shusterman (D-157), founder and chair of the Animal Protection Caucus, for her unwavering dedication to wildlife protection.

Victoria's Law

To honor Victoria, a dog that became paralyzed from and passed down a dangerous genetic condition to the estimated 150-200 puppies she carried during her time in a puppy mill, Representatives Jeanne McNeill (D-133) and K.C. Tomlinson (R-18) introduced HB 1816. Representative McNeill and Tomlinson's legislation would drive the pet market towards humane sources like shelters, rescues, and responsible breeders, stop the sale of puppy mill puppies, kittens, and rabbits in pet stores, and protect consumers from being duped into supporting puppy mills. On October 27th, advocates tabled at an event in support of House Bill 1816, "Victoria's Law". Our tables focused on stopping puppy mill cruelty. There was a press conference following the event to announce this important legislation.

Other animal welfare legislation

The House Judiciary Committee also advanced several other animal-related bills:

- Representative Mike Armanini's (R-75) Police Canine Fentanyl Detection Training Bill (HB 1344);
- Representatives Liz Hanbridge (D-61) and Steve Malagari's (D-53) ban on cat declawing (HB 1716);
- Representatives Kate Klunk's (R-169) House Bill 1932, sexual crimes against animals legislation;
- Representative Melissa Shusterman's (D-157) House Bill 1938 penalties for repeat offenders;
- Representative Christina Sappye's (D-158) House Bill 1933 mandated reporter bill;
- Representative Mary Isaacs's (D-175) Animal Welfare Cooperation Act, to give co-jurisdiction to prosecute animal cruelty crimes upon request of a local prosecutor (House Bill 879);
- Representative Isaacson's (D-175) bill that increases penalties should ear cropping and tail docking be performed by someone other than licensed veterinarians (House Bill 608); and
- Rep. Sappye's (D-158) HR 323 to recognize October as "Animal Safety and Protection Month.

As the legislature reconvenes in January for the second year of a two-year session, we are committed to building this critical momentum. We aim to continue to advance this year's animal welfare legislation!

Local ordinances

Our state policy work is critical to gaining (and maintaining) legal protection for animals throughout Pennsylvania. Advancing local ordinances is also an important part of this work. Ordinances not only support our state initiatives but offer greater protection for animals at the local level. We are so proud of our humane local elected officials and animal advocates who have worked to establish several animal protection ordinances in their local communities. Abington Township in Montgomery County and West Chester unanimously passed Humane Pet Store Ordinances to prohibit the retail sale of dogs, cats and rabbits. Humane-minded local lawmakers in West Norriton Township also passed an ordinance to prohibit the retail sales of puppies, kittens and rabbits in pet stores. They joined 8 states and over 500 localities across the US, including Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Wilkinsburg, Sharpsburg, Bellevue, Allentown and Easton taking action to help end the puppy mill industry. Your constituents can contribute to this important advancement by taking action to stop puppy mills: follow [these steps](#) to stop puppy mills in your area.

How you can help

Encourage your colleagues to **support anti-cruelty legislation** and oppose any bills that would harm animals. Join the bipartisan and bicameral **Animal Protection Caucus** headed by Reps. Melissa Shusterman (D-157) and K.C. Tomlinson (R-18) and Sens. Rosemary Brown (R-40) and Nick Piscottano (D-45). **Contact Emilie Lambert at ELambert@pahouse.net** to add your name to the caucus.



Picture from the Animal Protection Caucus membership kick-off meeting. This event focused on encouraging legislators to sign up for the 2025-26 Animal Protection Caucus, and discussing past successes we've had, what we are working on this year, and anticipated events such as "Bring your dog to work day"!