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**2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE: ILLINOIS**

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Candidate Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Office Sought: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Staff Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Animals play an important role in the lives of many Americans. Countless citizens look to their state government to protect animals from cruel treatment and exploitation. Humane-minded individuals care deeply about the positions their elected officials take on animal protection issues.

For information on the range and details of our issue areas, please visit the websites of the Humane Society Legislative Fund (hslf.org) or the Humane Society of the United States (humanesociety.org).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

What actions have you taken to promote the welfare of animals in the past? (Please include any action taken in an official or unofficial context.)

Are there any animal welfare programs or issues of importance to you that you would take the initiative on after you are elected?

Will you post information in your campaign materials stating your positions on animal protection issues?

Do you have, or have you had in the past, any pets that have made an impact on you personally?

**STATE ISSUES:**

Members of state legislatures influence animal protection policy by sponsoring or cosponsoring humane legislation, opposing government programs that use taxpayer funds to harm animals, supporting funding for government programs to protect animals and for adequate enforcement of animal welfare laws, and opposing inhumane laws or those which weaken current protections. We would like to know your position on the following important animal welfare issues, which are subject to debate in your state.

***PETS AND CRUELTY***

**Puppy Mills:** In 2021, in a landmark victory in the fight against cruel puppy mills, Gov. Pritzker signed the Humane Pet Store Bill ([H.B. 1711](https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocNum=1711&GAID=16&DocTypeID=HB&SessionID=110&GA=102)) into law. Illinois pet stores were selling thousands of puppies each year from large-scale commercial breeders and brokers who treat mother dogs as little more than breeding machines, and puppies as mere products. These animals often leave the mills sick and unsocialized. Dozens of Illinois puppy-selling pet stores can no longer offer commercially raised puppies and kittens for sale—they must instead source from shelters, rescues, and responsible breeders. The new law sends a clear message: the days when pet stores can showcase the puppy or kitten in the window, while puppy and kitten mills hide their cruelty and negligence, are coming to an end. However, new bills constantly threaten to wipe out this critical progress—for example, 2022’s [H.B. 4643](https://legiscan.com/IL/bill/HB4643/2021) and 2023’s [H.B. 2793](https://ilga.gov/legislation/BillStatus.asp?DocTypeID=HB&DocNum=2793&GAID=17&SessionID=112&LegID=147919) sought to once again allow pet stores to source from high-volume, inhumane puppy and kitten mills.

Will you oppose legislation to repeal or reverse the Humane Pet Store Law?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

**Cat Declawing:** Many countries and hundreds of cities in the U.S. have banned cat declawing because the procedure frequently results in pain in the paw, infection, tissue necrosis (tissue death), lameness, and back pain. Removing claws changes the way a cat's foot meets the ground and can cause pain. There can also be a regrowth of improperly removed claws, nerve damage, and bone spurs. Further, cat declawing has been associated with drastic changes in a cat’s behavior, increasing biting and other negative behaviors. The Humane Society Legislative Fund opposes declawing except for the rare cases when it is necessary for medical purposes to the feline, such as the removal of cancerous nail bed tumors.

Will you support legislation to prohibit the surgical declawing of cats?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

***FARM ANIMAL PROTECTION AND FOOD SAFETY***

**Fur Fashion:** Animals need their fur coats more than we do, and whether trapped in the wild or raised on farms, animals used in the fur industry suffer immensely. On fur factory farms in the U.S. and around the world, millions of rabbits, foxes, mink, and other wild animals spend their entire lives in cramped cages, deprived of the ability to engage in natural behaviors—only to be crudely gassed or electrocuted at the end. In the wild, animals are caught in crippling leghold traps without food or water, suffering for days before they die or are killed. Leghold traps are indiscriminate, often maiming and killing non-target animals, like threatened species and even pets—all this in the name of fashion. Prohibiting the sales of new fur products will support efforts to end this cruel industry, while still allowing businesses to sell vintage or used fur products, and continue services caring for fur products, such as storage and cleaning.

Will you support legislation to prohibit the sale of new products containing fur from animals?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

**Factory Farming:** On a typical factory farm, egg-laying hens are packed into battery cages where they cannot engage in their most basic behavioral needs, or even spread their wings. As consumer awareness grows of the agonizing, high-density conditions animals like battery hens endure, there is higher demand for animal products from more humane conditions. In response, egg producers around the world are investing in cage-free farms—where cage-free hens are able to walk, spread their wings and lay their eggs in nests—and entire states are enacting humane sourcing standards.

Will you support legislation to prohibit the production and sale of eggs from egg-laying hens that are cruelly confined to battery cages on factory farms?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

***ANIMALS IN RESEARCH***

**Alternatives Development:** It would shock most Americans to learn that tens of thousands of dogs are used in research experiments each year in the U.S. But in 2023, Illinois passed a trailblazing new law prohibiting the use of dogs or cats in toxicological research—with no exemption carved out for pharmaceutical companies. As a leader in laboratory animal protection, Illinois will no longer allow terrified dogs and cats to be subjected to unnecessary, painful product testing. Yet, other animals such as rabbits, mice, guinea pigs, and nonhuman primates are still made to suffer endlessly as test subjects, and needlessly. In 2016, the federal government established a mandate to promote the development and implementation of test methods and strategies to reduce animal testing, and to provide information of equivalent or better scientific quality and relevance for assessing risks to human health or the environment. Many of these non-animal alternatives are already in use by industry, and the reality is that they don't just spare countless animals from cruelty, but can also be cheaper, faster, and more relevant to human biology—therefore more reliable at predicting safety.

Will you support the continued development of alternative, non-animal testing methods?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

***WILDLIFE***

**Killing Contests:** Wildlife killing contests are organized events in which participants compete for prizes to see who can kill the most or the largest animals within a certain time period. Thousands of animals–including coyotes, foxes, bobcats, prairie dogs, rabbits, and squirrels–are killed in these events every year across the U.S.

Will you support legislation to address killing contests by making it unlawful for any person to organize, sponsor, promote, conduct, or participate in a competitive event at which the participants harass or take covered wildlife?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

**Appointments to State Agencies:** Illinois state agencies are responsible for awide range of policymaking, with immeasurable effects on the state’s animal populations and wildlife habitats.For example, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources sets protections for endangered species, maintains nature preserves, and manages a series of habitat conservation programs, while also issuing a multitude of hunting and fishing licenses. With much to gain, special interests often fill state commission seats—where there should instead be a diverse group of perspectives, representing the broad interests of the public.

Will you encourage the appointment of a diverse range of experts committed to preserving Illinois’ natural beauty and wildlife, backed by science and not by special interests?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

**Thank you for your time! Please return the completed questionnaire to:**

**Humane Society Legislative Fund**

**1255 23rd St NW, Suite 455**

**Washington, D.C. 20037**

**Phone: (202) 676-2314**

**Email: info@hslf.org**

Rev 3/4/24