

# HUMANE ACTIVIST

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## FIRING BACK ON LEAD SHOT

**Protecting the unintended victims of lead ammunition**

**As a graduate student**, wildlife toxicologist Myra Finkelstein traveled across the Pacific to study lead poisoning in Laysan albatrosses. These majestic seabirds breed in springtime on Midway Atoll, a chain of small islands once the site of an epic World War II naval battle. The U.S. Navy closed its operations there in 1993 but left behind aging buildings covered with flaking lead paint.

Albatrosses nest on the ground, so Finkelstein had no trouble taking blood samples from fuzzy gray chicks. She could see a clear symptom of lead poisoning: chicks dragging paralyzed wings behind them. At the end of their breeding season each summer, adult albatrosses return to sea, and chicks normally fledge and follow them. But chicks with paralyzed wings couldn't fly. CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



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## HUMANE SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE FUND™

The Humane Society Legislative Fund is a social welfare organization incorporated under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code and formed in 2004 as a separate lobbying affiliate of The Humane Society of the United States. HSLF works to pass animal protection laws at the state and federal levels, to educate the public about animal protection issues, and to support humane candidates for office. On the web at [hsf.org](http://hsf.org).

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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

More than 1,000 wolves have been killed with painful steel-jawed leghold traps, hound hunting, and other methods since Wisconsin, Minnesota, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming legalized hunting seasons—including storied Yellowstone National Park wolves whose packs had been studied for decades but were gunned down in their GPS collars after crossing over the park border.

As if that wasn't bad enough, Montana officials now propose lengthening the wolf hunting season and increasing the bag limit. It's alarming to Yellowstone administrators who say it places more of the park's wolves in jeopardy when they step into Montana—putting the Department of the Interior in the awkward position of handing wolf management to the states and then watching from the sidelines as they kill the very descendants of the wolves reintroduced to the park 17 years ago.

In June, Wisconsin raised its quota to 275 wolves, which when combined with other forms of human-caused wolf mortality likely will result in 50 percent of the state's entire wolf population being killed—despite the fact that Wisconsin voters oppose wolf hunting by a more than 8-1 margin.

Now the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to add to the carnage, proposing to drop endangered species protections for the gray wolf population in nearly all of the lower 48 states, with the exception of about 75 wild Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico.

Some states have set up sound, capable management plans for wolves—such as Washington, which this year passed legislation to create a state gray wolf conflict account to be used for mitigation, assessment, and payments for injury or loss of livestock caused by wolves. But many others have taken a regressive, dangerous approach. The Utah legislature even handed out hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to a private group to advocate for killing wolves.

In Michigan, state politicians are so dead-set on killing wolves that they pulled a fast one on voters who, in reaction to a bill designating wolves as a game species, gathered more than 250,000 signatures to place the question on the ballot. Michigan lawmakers passed a second bill, signed into law by Gov. Rick Snyder, that subverts the will of the people by transferring the power to decide wildlife issues to the Natural Resources Committee—seven unelected bureaucrats. This legislative sleight of hand paves the way to kill wolves and other protected species. Michigan citizens have launched a second referendum campaign to fight back against this undemocratic power grab.

Instead of hoping for the best from a patchwork of state authorities, subject to varying degrees of political power exerted by ranching and hunting interests, the federal government should be overseeing and working with the states and driving the nation toward full recovery of wolves.



The staff at HSLF sends condolences to Rep. John Yarmuth, D-Ky., whose beloved 13-year-old cat Rice passed away this summer. Rice won the title of "Elder Statescat" in the 2011 Congressional Pet Photo Contest. On Rep. Yarmuth's Facebook page, Rice was praised as "a dedicated family man" and "close adviser."



➔ **TO COMMENT** on the USFWS's delisting proposal, visit [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov). To learn more about the Michigan campaign, visit [keepwolvesprotected.com](http://keepwolvesprotected.com).

Sincerely,

Michael Markarian  
President

Humane Society Legislative Fund



Lead poisoning is epidemic in California condors, traced to ingesting fragments of lead ammunition in their prey.



CONTINUED FROM COVER

"I saw one chick lying on the ground unable to move, with its parents trying to feed it and coax it to respond," Finkelstein recalls. "The chick could barely lift its head, but the parents stayed with it for hours. Once chicks' wings were paralyzed, though, they were as good as dead."

In 2009, Finkelstein, then an assistant researcher at the University of California at Santa Cruz, published a study showing that lead poisoning on Midway was a serious threat to the Laysan albatross population. Her work helped spur the federal government to accelerate lead paint removal from Midway buildings.

In a similar study of critically endangered California condors published last year, Finkelstein and other researchers concluded that lead poisoning is epidemic in the iconic birds: Each year between 1997 and 2010, about 20 percent of free-flying condors in California had blood lead levels high enough to need clinical treatment for poisoning. The researchers used chemical analysis to pinpoint the cause: lead hunting ammunition lodged in the birds' prey.

Worldwide, more than 130 species of wild animals, up and down the food chain, from grizzlies to songbirds, suffer secondary effects of lead ammo. "We

have gotten toxic lead substances out of paint and so many other products, and it's time to stop dumping poison in our environment and wildlife habitat," HSLF president Michael Markarian says. "These bullets keep on killing long after they have left the chamber."

HSLF has fought against federal "sportsmen's" acts, which would have stripped the Environmental Protection Agency of its ability to regulate lead ammunition. And in California, where HSLF worked last year to support animal-friendly candidates, the recent case of a poisoned golden eagle underscored the need to pass Assembly Bill 711, requiring all hunters in California to use non-lead ammunition.

"She couldn't stand or move her tongue normally, and she also had extensive neurological damage," says Vickie Joseph, a veterinarian specializing in avian medicine at the Bird and Pet Clinic of Roseville. The clinic, which works with the California Foundation for Birds of Prey, sees birds with lead poisoning year-round, including bald and golden eagles, falcons, and turkey vultures.



This golden eagle was found floundering in California—her legs paralyzed as a result of severe lead poisoning. She died three weeks later.

This golden eagle was found flopping around on the ground—she could still flap her wings, but her legs were paralyzed. At the clinic, a machine to test for levels of lead typically reads in numbers; this one just said, "High."

The reading was off the scale.

After three weeks, and \$3,000 worth of treatment, the bird died from respiratory failure, a secondary effect of lead poisoning.

Compounding the problem of inherent toxicity, even one lead bullet has a wide range, breaking into small fragments when striking an animal and scattering outward from the wound. Predators and scavengers like coyotes and vultures can then ingest the poisonous fragments when preying on the remains of an animal left behind by a hunter, or even a wounded animal suffering from a shot.

Switching to alternatives such as copper (which does not fragment) reduces harm to scavenging animals as well as to humans, since lead residues are a health risk for people as well. Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shown that people who ate deer and other wild animals shot by lead ammo had 50 percent more lead in their blood than those who didn't.

In a poll of California voters, a majority of gun owners supported restrictions on lead hunting ammunition. That includes almost three dozen avid hunters who in April wrote to the author of AB 711, Assemblyman Anthony Rendon, in support of the bill, warning that "the continued use by hunters of lead ammunition in the face of mounting evidence of lead's risk to both wildlife and public health is at odds with the proud tradition of responsible hunting stewardship."

Nonetheless, the National Rifle Association and ammunition manufacturers oppose AB 711, contending it's an anti-hunting initiative.

"They made the same claims in 1991 when lead ammo was banned for waterfowl hunting, saying it would be the end of duck hunting and goose hunting," Markarian says. "Obviously those claims were overblown, and hunters adapted to non-lead ammunition. With alternatives on the market like steel, copper, and bismuth that have nearly the same cost and often better ballistic properties, it's just petulant and foolish to keep using toxic lead.

"There is innovation in every industry, and hunters and ammunition manufacturers should join the movement to transition away from toxic lead ammunition. Those who are truly conservationists and care about the environment can help lead the way, rather than stand in the way." ■

# LEGISLATIVE LINEUP

The following is a sample of HSLF-supported animal protection bills before the U.S. Congress. It's vital that you call, email, or write your legislators to let them know your views on these bills. To find out who your legislators are and how to reach them directly, go to [hslf.org/leglookup](http://hslf.org/leglookup) or call 202-676-2314.

When you call a legislator's office, ask to speak with the staff person handling animal protection issues. Give the bill number (if available) and

the name of the bill or issue. Be polite, brief, and to the point. If you plan to visit Washington, D.C., make an appointment to meet with your legislators or their staff to discuss animal issues. We can help you with background information and may be able to accompany you on your visits.

**Please note:** Due to security procedures at Capitol Hill, regular mail to members of Congress may be significantly delayed. Telephone calls and emails are the best ways to contact your legislators about pending bills.

## PETS AND CRUELTY



### Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act

H.R. 366 / S. 666  
Related language included in Farm Bills (H.R. 2642 / S. 954)

To establish misdemeanor penalties for knowingly attending an organized animal fight and felony penalties for knowingly bringing a minor to such a fight. Sponsors: Reps. Marino, R-Pa.; McGovern, D-Mass.; Campbell, R-Calif.; Moran, D-Va. / Sens. Blumenthal, D-Conn.; Kirk, R-Ill.; Cantwell, D-Wash.; Vitter, R-La.

### Pets on Trains Act

H.R. 2066

To require Amtrak to propose a pet policy that allows passengers to transport domesticated cats and dogs on certain Amtrak trains. Sponsors: Reps. Denham, R-Calif.; Cohen, D-Tenn.

### Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety Act

H.R. 847 / S. 395

To require that breeders who sell 50 or more puppies per year directly to consumers online or by other means be licensed and inspected; and to require that breeding dogs at commercial facilities be allowed to exercise daily. Sponsors: Reps. Gerlach, R-Pa.; Farr, D-Calif.; Young, R-Fla.; Capps, D-Calif. / Sens. Durbin, D-Ill.; Vitter, R-La.

### Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act

H.R. 183

To create a pilot program for veterans to train dogs (including those from shelters) as a form of therapy for post-deployment mental health conditions. The dogs are then given to veterans with disabilities. Sponsor: Rep. Grimm, R-N.Y.

## EQUINES



### Prevent All Soring Tactics Act

H.R. 1518 / S. 1406

To amend the Horse Protection Act to end the failed industry self-policing system, strengthen penalties, ban the use of devices associated with soring, and make illegal the actual soring of a horse for the purpose of showing or selling the animal. Sponsors: Reps. Whitfield, R-Ky.; Cohen, D-Tenn. / Sens. Ayotte, R-N.H.; Warner, D-Va.

### Safeguard American Food Exports Act

H.R. 1094 / S. 541

To protect American horses and the public by prohibiting the transport and export of U.S. horses to slaughter for human consumption. American horses are not raised for food and are routinely given hundreds of drugs over their lifetimes that can be toxic to humans if ingested. Sponsors: Reps. Meehan, R-Pa.; Schakowsky, D-Ill. / Sens. Landrieu, D-La.; Graham, R-S.C.

### Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act

H.R. 1705

To expand the Department of Defense managed health care program to include coverage of rehabilitative therapeutic exercises that utilize horses. Sponsors: Reps. Burgess, R-Texas; Cotton, R-Ark.



## FARM ANIMALS



**Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments**  
H.R. 1731 / S. 820

To provide for a uniform national standard for the housing and treatment of egg-laying hens, phased in over a period of 15-16 years, which will significantly improve animal welfare and provide a stable future for egg farmers. Sponsors: Reps. Schrader, D-Ore.; Denham, R-Calif.; Farr, D-Calif; Fitzpatrick, R-Pa. / Sen. Feinstein, D-Calif.

**Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment / Preventing Antibiotic Resistance**  
H.R. 1150 / S. 1256

To phase out routine nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in farm animals—a common practice to promote growth and compensate for overcrowded, stressful, unsanitary conditions on factory farms—in order to maintain the effectiveness of these medicines for treating sick people and animals. Sponsors: Rep. Slaughter, D-N.Y. / Sen. Feinstein, D-Calif.

## ANIMALS IN RESEARCH



**Pet Safety and Protection Act**  
H.R. 2224

To prohibit the use in research of dogs and cats obtained through Class B dealers from random sources such as pet theft and free-to-good-home ads. Sponsor: Rep. Doyle, D-Pa.



## Word Up A well-written letter packs a punch

**LOVE LETTERS.** Thank you letters. Complaint letters. Cover letters. Letters to the editor. Letters to Ann Landers. Letters to Santa.

Whether handwritten or electronic, there's nothing like a well-crafted letter to express an opinion, convey an emotion, or prompt an action. Animal advocates have used email campaigns to prevent a South Korean whale hunt, persuade a clothing company to recommit to being fur-free, and convince Amazon.com's Japanese website to ban sales of whale, dolphin, and porpoise products.

And while there's impressive strength in numbers, the voice of even a single letter writer can still have an impact.

In July, Rep. Erik Paulsen, R-Minn., received an email from a constituent urging him to support the Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety Act (H.R. 847/S. 395), which would require large-scale breeders who sell only via the Internet to be licensed and inspected. "This issue is very important to me," the constituent wrote. "Dogs shouldn't be treated like a cash crop."

Paulsen happens to be a cosponsor of that bill, as well as of a bill that would criminalize knowing attendance at an organized animal fight. The email was a reminder of how meaningful these issues are to the people of Minnesota.

With a staffer's dog at his side, Paulsen read the email aloud during his weekly Correspondence Corner video on YouTube. "We both thank you for sharing your concern for animal rights," he said afterward, while patting Arbor the dog.

"... I want you to know, as a proud pet owner myself, I will continue to make sure that we're protecting those rights down the road."

**For the best chance of having your letter noticed, remember:**

- **Keep it short and direct:** Legislators don't have a lot of time and are less likely to make it all the way through a lengthy letter.
- **Stay on topic:** Identify your issue and make clear what you are asking your legislator to do.
- **Be polite:** Sarcasm, threats, and insults will only earn negative attention.

Huffman's work in the California State Assembly on behalf of sharks and other animals consistently earned him a score of 100+ on HSLF's California scorecard.



## Golden State of Mind

Jared Huffman's affinity for the natural world inspires the freshman congressman's advocacy for animals

**SINCE HE WAS A CHILD**, Rep. Jared Huffman has been captivated with marine life. "When I was in the sixth or seventh grade, I could tell you the genus and species of everything on the dolphin family tree. I still can," says the freshman from California's 2nd Congressional District.

Huffman's fascination with water ecosystems, as well as his love for his childhood dog, led him to be a tireless advocate for animals and the environment during his six years in the California State Assembly. He authored bills that banned the trade in shark fins, increased penalties for wildlife poaching, and required all eggs sold in the state to comply with Proposition 2 standards of animal welfare—all of which were passed and signed into law. He also voted to increase penalties for attending dogfights and to prohibit the painful and unnecessary practice of cutting tails off cows.

Huffman has carried his concern for animal welfare to Washington, where he serves on the Committee on Natural Resources. One of his first orders of business was to co-author a letter to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, urging it to revise a proposal that would undermine state bans on the trade in shark fins. He spoke with *Humane Activist* for this edited interview.

### **Why is the shark finning issue so important to you?**

I care about the health of our marine environment. All of the science and all of the advocates on these issues are telling us that the trade in shark fins, driven by the extreme high value of the fin for shark fin soup, has been driving the slaughter of our sharks worldwide. It's extremely wasteful and cruel; the fish are harvested just for the fin and thrown back to die. The numbers are staggering—tens of millions of sharks every year—and we're beginning to feel the ripple effects throughout the ocean ecosystem. It's what you'd expect when you start removing the top predator in the food chain.

### **As a California assembly member, you went to bat for wildlife repeatedly. What would you like to do for wildlife as a member of Congress?**

I represent a district that goes from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border—it has incredible environmental values and public areas, natural resource areas that are full of precious wildlife, and a constituency that cares about animals. I don't have to think too much about it. Supporting wildlife and good environmental policies is just a fundamental part of our stewardship responsibility.

### **Are there other issues that particularly concern you?**

I love fisheries because I'm an outdoorsman and I love to fish. The health of our fisheries and of all of the ecosystems related to fisheries—I'm fascinated by the interdependency. We have Chinook salmon in real trouble in California that go through the Bay-Delta system, but the orca whales offshore depend on those salmon. People don't often make these connections, but it really is all connected.

### **If the Farm Bill becomes law with the King amendment intact, how would that affect California's law requiring that eggs sold there not come from battery-caged hens?**

It will invalidate it. It's a terrible amendment. It would have the effect of preventing any state from passing any standard to protect food safety, animal housing, or basically to do anything in the area of food policy. It's bad for California because what it means is that Prop 2—and my AB 1437 that helped implement Prop 2—would apply only to eggs produced in the state and not to those sold by outside producers. It would enable unscrupulous producers that have been found guilty of major violations of health and safety standards. ■



# “IT'S ABOUT RAISING AWARENESS”

## REP. GRIMM DISCUSSES SHARK FINNING, COALITION BUILDING

**THERE ARE TIMES WHEN** U.S. Rep. Michael Grimm, R-N.Y., will be conducting a meeting in his Capitol Hill office, and suddenly, a whirlwind dervish of fur will blow through the door.

In charges Sebastian, the Yorkshire terrier who Grimm adopted in 2011 following an HSUS puppy mill rescue in Missouri. In charges Monkey, his deputy chief of staff's dog. The two pups will chase each other. They'll playfully bite at each other. And then, they're gone—back out the door.

“People just look at me like, ‘What just happened?’” Grimm says with a laugh, before adding that their presence has provided a morale boost for the office, for the often tense, gridlocked atmosphere of Washington. “It really is. They do funny things. They make you laugh. They're part of the office family.”

Extolling those therapeutic benefits of having a pet, Grimm's first bill in Congress was the Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act (see Page 4). A consistent champion for animals, the former Marine spoke with *Humane Activist* for this edited interview—in which he took time to lay out the systematic approach he takes for building support for animal protection-type bills within his Republican caucus.

“A lot of it is member-to-member,” Grimm starts. And so, looking at voting records, looking for leaders, he tries to find two or three Republicans who are passionate about the issue, then proposes a partnership. From there, he and his new partners build lists, each calling a certain number of members. Behind the scenes, he'll also have his staff call legislative directors and chiefs of staff in other offices. “With the busy schedule of members, and just the volume of issues that you're dealing with,” he says, “you can't rely on one conversation.”

If a partner reports back that someone seemed a little unsure about their support, Grimm will circle back with them. Those who are on-board, though, can offer new relationships to build more support. Eventually, the push extends across the aisle as well. “If you have the passion, and you're willing to work hard enough, you can build the coalition so you can get it done.”

**You've signed a letter to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration about protecting state bans on shark finning. And you've signed on to cosponsor House Resolution 285, expressing that the House should ban the import of shark fins obtained through finning. What put this issue on your radar?**

I think it's heinous. I really think the U.S. should be a leader in shark conservation. The practice itself of shark finning—it's inhumane, it's

despicable, it's harmful to the ocean's ecosystem, and it's unfair to U.S. fishermen. So I think from every stakeholder involved, we should be appalled and doing everything we can to prevent this disgusting practice. I don't get too excited over too many things, because I have a lot of issues on my plate. But I find this one particularly offensive.

**Do you think this is something that can get done—the ban?**

I do. I think there are enough people, if we push hard enough. I've got to tell you: Most people don't know it's happening. It's about raising awareness. Because when you tell someone, most people are offended by it. Most people would say, “That's disgraceful.”

**And, of course, how's Sebastian doing these days?**

Spoiled rotten. This dog, most humans should have his life. He is carried around the office half the time like a baby. I literally have scores of people that come in—and I'm thinking, wow, I'm pretty popular. Not one of them is here to see me; they're here to see Sebbie. He has everyone in this office wrapped around his finger. He's running the office, actually. ■

**“I don't get too excited over too many things, because I have a lot of issues on my plate. But I find this one particularly offensive.”**





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2100 L Street, NW  
Suite 310  
Washington, DC 20037

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## { THE AYES HAVE IT }



➡ **THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH** announced in June that 310 of the approximately 360 government-owned chimpanzees in laboratories will be sent to sanctuary, guaranteeing they will never be used for research. To make room for the retirees, the Obama Administration—as well as HSLF and The HSUS—has urged Congress to enable the use of NIH funds to expand the national sanctuary system run by Chimp Haven in Louisiana. The news followed a proposal by the **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE** to list all chimpanzees as endangered, which is expected to sharply curtail their use in the pet and entertainment trades and for invasive biomedical research. Currently, only wild chimps are listed as endangered; an HSUS-led coalition filed a legal petition to do away the split listing.

➡ **NEVADA GOV. BRIAN SANDOVAL** signed a bill upgrading the state's weak punishments for cockfighting. Nevada joins 36 other states in imposing first-offense felony penalties for engaging in the blood sport. (Four other states have felony penalties for repeat offenders.) The bill also levies harsher misdemeanor charges on those who willingly attend fights. Thirty years ago, only seven states had felony cockfighting laws, and cockfighting was still legal in six states, wrote HSLF president Michael Markarian in his blog. "In recent years, HSLF, The HSUS, and other groups made a conscious decision to reshape the legal landscape ... to show a zero tolerance policy for this conduct in our country." Today, cockfighting is illegal in all 50 states and punishable as a felony in 40.

➡ The second-largest school district in California has joined the Meatless Monday movement. **SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT** board members voted to feature the program in all its elementary and K-8 schools. With the help of HSLF supporter Judy Ki, the San Diego school system joins the **LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**, the second largest in the country, as well as thousands of other schools, school districts, universities, and hospitals nationwide in adopting the plant-based plan—which has benefits for human health, animal welfare, and the environment.

➡ Referencing a growing group of scientists who consider dolphinariums "morally unacceptable," **INDIA'S MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS** banned keeping dolphins in captivity for entertainment purposes. India's brief foray into dolphin shows in 1998 ended with the death of four dolphins within six months of their importation from Bulgaria. A coalition of animal welfare organizations led a multiyear campaign to secure the ban.

