

Missouri Legislative End-of-Session Summary for 2012

May 21, 2012 - We have good news to report as the 2012 legislative session comes to a conclusion. Fortunately, we were able to defeat over a dozen bills that would have weakened our existing laws and several more that would have obstructed future efforts to prevent cruelty to animals.

This session started out on a sour note as the commercial dog breeders and agricultural interests sought revenge for the great success of the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act passed last year. One representative of an agricultural group stated that his industry was seeking its “pound of flesh” against our existing animal welfare laws as he claimed that the new puppy mill law had “devastated the dog breeding industry.” He was referring to the fact that over 600 commercial dog breeders have gone out of business as a result of the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act, a law which required significant improvements in living conditions for dogs confined in mass breeding operations.

Thanks to your support, we successfully defeated all of the negative bills introduced this legislative session that were in retribution for the passage of the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act:

DEFEATED
HB 1444 & SB 850
Eliminates Disposition Hearing

These bills would have seriously weakened our current anti-cruelty statutes by eliminating a disposition hearing for animals that have been abused and/or neglected. This would have resulted in abused and neglected animals being left in the hands of their abusers.

DEFEATED
HB 1324 & HJR 61
Restricts Oversight of Farm Animals

These bills would have prohibited local ordinances in reference to farm animals and would have exempted all existing factory farms from future regulations.

DEFEATED
HB 1796 & HB 1860
Ag-Gag Bills

These bills would have impeded investigations of animal abuse by making it a crime to videotape abuse at farms even for someone who had a legitimate reason for being at the farm. It also would have prohibited the distribution of such videotapes and would have criminalized the

showing of such videos by the media. In place of these draconian measures, the legislature passed a bill requiring any farm employee videotaping abuses at agricultural production facilities to report such abuses to a law enforcement agency within 24 hours.

DEFEATED
Restrictions on Future Ballot Initiatives

There were five different bills that would have made it more difficult to conduct a ballot initiative similar to Prop B which was successful in the ultimate passage of the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act.

There were numerous other bills directed against the welfare of animals that we were also able to defeat this year. A complete list of all animal welfare legislation from the 2012 session can be found here [2012 Detailed End-of-Session Report](#).

At the end of the 2012 legislative session, we can rest assured that our good laws remain intact, including the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act that has closed down hundreds of substandard puppy mills.

Thank You Again – Your Efforts Are Truly Making a Difference for the Animals