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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 1941 - Animal Welfare Act. This bill increases the protection afforded animals in transit and assures the more humane treatment of certain animals.

The Federal Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 provided the Secretary of Agriculture with authority to prescribe standards for the humane treatment of animals used for research and experimentation while in scientific institutions, on the premises of animal dealers, or in transit.

S. 1941 will:

- (1) Require common carriers and intermediate handlers to adhere to humane treatment regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture governing the transportation of animals.
- (2) Require that animals, within 10 days prior to shipment, be certified as healthy and sound by a licensed veterinarian (covers dogs, cats, and other animals that may be designated by the Secretary).
- (3) Prohibit the shipment of dogs, cats, and other designated animals before they reach a minimum age as determined by the Secretary.
- (4) Allow the transporting of animals under collect-upon-delivery arrangements, only if the shipper guarantees payment of round trip fare and other out-of-pocket expenses of the common carrier or intermediate handler for the care of animals.
- (5) Provide for civil penalties imposed by the Secretary of not more than a \$1,000 fine for each violation.
- (6) Add a new section to the existing Act making it a criminal offense for any person knowingly to sponsor or exhibit an animal in any animal fighting venture, to buy, sell, transport, deliver or receive animals for participation in such a venture.
- (7) Provide criminal penalties for violation of the animal fighting section consisting of imprisonment for not more than one year and/or a fine not to exceed \$5,000.
- (8) Authorize appropriations to the Secretary of Agriculture for enforcing the animal fighting section in amounts not to exceed \$100,000 for the transition quarter and \$400,000 for each fiscal year thereafter.
- (9) Empower the Secretary to obtain assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Treasury, or other law enforcement agencies of the U.S. & State and local governmental agencies, in the conduct of animal fighting venture investigations.

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