

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR ANIMALS
P.O. BOX 174
MANALAPAN, NJ 07726
732-446-6617

September 25, 2003

Dear Legislative Candidate:

As Election Day draws near, we are receiving telephone calls from our members and the general public asking where you stand on issues important to them. They are interested in your position on a variety of animal issues, some of which are included in the enclosed questionnaire.

Some questions refer to currently pending bills that you may review before answering. Other questions pertain to a general topic for which no bill exists. We ask that you please respond to each question although we realize that your final support will depend on the specific language of a particular bill.

We will make your responses available to our members and to national and local groups that comprise The Coalition to Protect Black Bears in New Jersey. They in turn will relay your responses to their members. Together, we account for 364,000 New Jersey residents.

On behalf of our members and those of 38 other organizations with New Jersey members, we thank you for your time and cooperation. Please return the questionnaire no later than October 14. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Theresa Fritzges

Theresa Fritzges, Ph.D.

Dear Legislative Candidate:

Please respond to each of the following questions by checking "Yes" or "No". We welcome any additional comments on a separate sheet. Please sign the questionnaire and return it to us no later than October 14. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

1. Students' Right to Choose

With the increasing rise of violence in the schools and recognizing the connection between animal abuse and human violence, an increasing number of teachers are incorporating humane education in their classes. In addition to obvious examples of animal abuse, students have become aware of the methods by which animals become experimental subjects or dissection specimens and the suffering they endure. Many students object to being a part of such violence and are in need of legal protection to guarantee that their ethical and religious rights are protected.

Numerous humane replacements (e.g., CD-ROMs, models, charts) are available at considerably less cost than living animals or specimens. Studies have shown that such methods are as effective as using animals in relaying the required knowledge and skills.

S240/A3159 provide that public school pupils may refuse to dissect, vivisection, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals or any parts thereof as part of their course of instruction. It also stipulates that any pupil choosing not to participate in such activities must be provided with an alternative education project by the school. **Would you support this legislation?**

YES () NO ()

2. Non-Economic Compensation for Loss of Companion Animal

Ask most people how they view their "pets" and they will undoubtedly tell you the animals are considered members of the family. Unfortunately, New Jersey law does not recognize the emotional bond between companion animals and their caregivers. Currently, if a companion animal is injured or killed by an intentional act, the guardian is entitled only to the monetary value of that animal.

A3339 would enable a person whose companion animal has been subjected to specific acts of cruelty to file a civil action for damages including, but not limited to, the monetary value of the animal, veterinary expenses, loss of companionship, and emotional distress suffered by the guardian. **Would you support this bill?** YES () NO ()

3. Sunday Hunting

Currently, animals are hunted year round (excluding Sundays). S2013/A3064 authorizes the Fish and Game Council to allow Sunday hunting as well. **Would you support this legislation?**

YES () NO ()

4. Green Acres

S563/A424 require, as a condition of receiving Green Acres funding for the acquisition or development of lands for recreation and conservation purposes, a local government unit or qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization to prepare, and submit to the Department of Environmental Protection, a statement concerning deer management on the lands to be so acquired or developed. **Would you support this legislation?** YES () NO ()

5. Black Bear Protection

The vast majority of New Jersey residents, particularly those residing in bear country, are opposed to a bear hunt:

Passaic County passed a resolution opposing the hunt;
West Milford (bear capital of New Jersey) has passed a resolution closing its land to hunting;
26 municipalities and 3 environmental commissions passed resolutions opposing the hunt in 2000. None of those resolutions has been rescinded;
Approximately 100,000 New Jersey residents have signed petitions opposing a black bear hunt;
The Coalition to Protect Black Bears in New Jersey, comprised of 38 organizations, represents approximately 364,000 New Jersey residents opposed to the black bear hunt.

S1219/A479 call for a five-year moratorium on the hunting of black bears. **Would you support the Black Bear Protection Bill?** YES (X) NO ()

6. Non-Lethal Methods of Living with Animals

In survey after survey, the majority of New Jersey residents interviewed say they are opposed to "controlling" Canada geese and deer by killing them. Instead, they favor non-lethal methods to deter unwelcome wildlife.

Proven effective options that merit consideration include: roadside reflectors; driver education; immunocontraception, where applicable; mitigation: edge buffers; landscaping, wildlife corridors; aversive conditioning; natural and artificial barriers.

Considering the public's opposition to the killing of wildlife and the number of viable non-lethal options available to reduce and prevent potential human/wildlife conflicts, would you support legislation that authorized the investigation and implementation of non-lethal alternatives? YES (X) NO ()

7. Fish & Game Council

Hunters now comprise less than 1% (0.6%) of New Jersey's population yet decisions affecting wildlife are made by the Fish & Game Council, which consists of 11 members, 10 of whom hunt or support hunting. Therefore, the voices of 99.4% of New Jersey citizens are not represented by the current make-up of this body. A.3764 expands the Council's membership to include individuals with experience in environmental protection or other fields relevant to animal welfare and with a background in the conservation of fish and wildlife, and revises the authority of the Fish and Game Council. **Would you support this bill?** YES (X) NO ()



Signature, please

George DeCarlo
District 21 Assembly cand: Date

Thank you, again, for your valuable time. Please return your completed form to:

New Jersey Legislative Action for Animals
P.O. Box 174
Manalapan, NJ 07726