

## **New York's Pataki Vetoes Bill to Ban Canned Hunts**

The Humane Society of the United States expressed dismay and contempt for New York Governor George Pataki after his August 27<sup>th</sup> veto of a bill (S. 2735a/A. 4069a) to ban the shooting of non-native mammals. On these "canned hunting" operations, so-called hunters are offered an opportunity to shoot the animal of their picking – from bison to Fallow deer to Red stags to Corsican rams -- in a "guaranteed kill" arrangement. There is no sport, and the client only pays for what he wounds or kills.

S. 2735a/A. 4069a, introduced by Senator Frank Padavan (R-Queens) and Assemblymember Scott Stringer (D-Manhattan), had a diverse collection of supporters and had passed both chambers of the legislature by a two-to-one margin -- 40-21 in the Senate and 97-48 in the Assembly. More than a dozen other states, including California, New Jersey, and Oregon, have strict bans on canned hunting operations. Pataki's veto prevents New York from joining the list of states that outlaw this form of animal cruelty.

Pataki had previously signed a bill in 1999 that banned canned hunts of ten acres or less, but now has refused to close a loophole in the law that has allowed the same canned hunts to continue operating if they are larger than ten acres. Whether eleven acres or eleven hundred, guides who work at canned hunts know where the animals feed, know how to trap the animals in corners of fences, and accompany their clients to guaranteed shots at point-blank range.

"The animal protection community in New York will long remember his pardon of animal abusers and his rebuke of humane advocates," stated Wayne Pacelle, senior vice president of The Humane Society of the United States. "Governor Pataki has embarrassed himself with this appalling veto of a bill to stop the repugnant and inhumane practice of shooting animals for a fee in fenced enclosures."

Mike Markarian, president of The Fund for Animals, added, "Pataki may attempt to masquerade as an animal advocate by occasionally signing some non-controversial legislation to protect dogs or cats, but his decision to veto this much-needed legislation will result in untold suffering for wild animals and it reveals that he is not a genuine advocate of humane treatment."

In a press release today Assemblymember Stringer, sponsor of A. 4069 said, "This is the most obvious example of the Governor pandering to big money groups, rather than making an informed decision about what is best for New York State. His veto message is full of factual errors, and it fails to explain this most deplorable decision. Unfortunately, defenseless animals will pay the price. It is shocking that Pataki would put profits over protecting animals from such cruel abuse."

The Humane Society of the United States urges animal advocates to contact Governor Pataki and express your dismay with his appalling action.

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To send an e-mail, go to <http://www.state.ny.us/governor> and click “contact the governor.”