



Oppose Section 6 of SB1184/HB1021 “Ag-Gag” Bills Stop Agribusiness’ Attempt to Hide Animal Cruelty, Food Safety Threats, Worker Abuse, and Pollution

Through whistleblowing employees and undercover investigations, animal abuse, unsafe working conditions, and environmental problems have been exposed on industrial factory farms. To prevent these problems from coming to light in the future, big agribusiness is sponsoring Section 6 of *SB 1184/HB 1021*; if passed, it would become a crime, punishable by imprisonment for up to a year, to simply *photograph or videotape* abusive, unsanitary or otherwise unethical activity on a farm.

Rather than preventing problems, big ag is trying to hide them.

Agribusiness interests want to criminalize undercover exposés by introducing “Ag-Gag” bills in several states to outlaw such activities as producing, possessing or distributing video or photographs taken on a farm without the owner’s approval – effectively blocking whistleblowers from exposing animal cruelty, food safety issues, poor working conditions and more.

Section 6 of SB 1184/HB 1021 would criminalize photography, videotaping and audio recording of a broad array of activities on agricultural property. Even employees and journalists who take photos or video to document misconduct on farms could face criminal prosecution if Section 6 is passed, whether it’s documenting mistreatment of animals, food safety concerns, worker safety violations, sexual harassment, financial embezzlement, or environmental crimes.

Whistleblowing employees, undercover exposés, and investigative journalists protect the public.

- Section 6 aims to prevent exposés like the 2008 investigation of the Hallmark/Westland slaughter plant in California (see photo) that led to the largest meat recall in U.S. history after revealing sick animals being slaughtered for human consumption. The recall prevented potentially tainted meat from being distributed to school cafeterias, *including dozens of school districts in Florida.*
- Florida’s current humane slaughter and livestock euthanasia laws (F.S.S. 828.22-828.26) resulted from a 1999 undercover video documenting horrific cruelty at an Okeechobee farm.
- In November 2011, cruelty was documented on video at a Miami-Dade slaughterhouse, leading to the plant’s closure and the operator’s arrest. Police found egregious animal cruelty along with blood and other fluids seeping into the ground, posing a significant health risk to city residents. If enacted, the Ag-Gag bills would criminalize the videographer who exposed this illegal activity, while shielding the plant operator’s abuses from ever being discovered, and keeping the public in harm’s way.



Last year, four states, including Florida, introduced Ag-Gag bills. *Not a single one passed*, due to public outrage over the serious threat they pose to constitutional freedoms, food safety, animal welfare, and workers. **Please stop efforts to shield animal agriculture from public scrutiny:**

Oppose Section 6 of SB1184 (Norman) / HB1021 (Albritton)