



September 23, 2013

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*Founder*

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Dear Honorable members of the New Jersey legislature,

As a native New Jerseyan, I've always been proud of our state for its pro-animal positions, whether it be relating to the protection of dogs, cats, horses or other animals. Time and again, our lawmakers have made it clear that they care about preventing animal cruelty. It's for that reason that overwhelmingly—by votes of 29 to 4 in the Senate and 60 to 5 in the Assembly—you supported S. 1921, authored by Senator Raymond Lesniak, to phase out the cruel confinement of pigs in “gestation crates,” a standard but inhumane practice in the industrial pork industry.

As you know, in pork production, breeding pigs are confined every moment of the day and night in gestation crates during their four-month pregnancy. The cages are so small they can't even turn around. This happens pregnancy after pregnancy for their entire lives, adding up to years of virtual immobilization. Anyone who's ever interacted with pigs knows that they're social, intelligent animals who want to avoid suffering just as much as the dogs and cats we welcome into our families.

The Star-Ledger called this bill “basic decency,” while the Times of Trenton said that the Assembly “should move swiftly toward passage and put the bill on the governor's desk.” And Sen. Lesniak's bill did end up just there, but unfortunately, that's where the effort to help prevent cruelty died, since Gov. Christie decided to veto the bill after hearing from out-of-state (read: Iowa) pork interests.

I urge you to reaffirm your support for this common sense legislation and vote to override Gov. Christie's regrettable veto. These animals have committed no crime, yet they're treated worse than even the most violent criminals would be treated. No prisoner in our state—or country, for that matter—is kept in a cage so small he can't even turn around for months on end. This is torture, and we shouldn't permit it to be inflicted on anyone, especially animals who have done nothing to deserve such callous punishment.

A statewide survey revealed 91 percent of New Jersey voters support the legislation, and the override is backed by my friends at The Humane Society of the United States, along with local animal welfare groups like the New Jersey SPCA.

Please stand with the overwhelming majority of New Jerseyans and help make S. 1921 law. It's the right thing to do for animals and for our state.

Thank you,