

November 22, 2004

Original to Follow

Hon. Irwin Cotler, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
East Memorial Building, 4th Floor 284 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H8

Dear Minister:

Canada's animal-based sectors, as represented by the undersigned, wish to express our support for the swift passage of certain amendments to the Criminal Code: Cruelty to Animals provisions. This national coalition, on behalf of the over one million Canadians we represent, join with others who are expressing support for improved animal cruelty legislation. Specifically, we are calling for the reintroduction and adoption of the measures contained within Bill C-22 (as it stood when Parliament dissolved for the 38th General Election).

We reiterate our support for legislation to improve animal cruelty provisions by increasing fines and penalties in cases of animal abuse, while upholding the legal rights and obligations of all Canadians. We are of the opinion that Bill C-22 as passed by the House of Commons in the previous Session has achieved that goal. It is noteworthy that the Bill as written has also gained the support of Members of Parliament, animal advocacy groups and the Canadian public at-large. Additionally, we would be remiss if we failed to support the substantive work and subsequent recommendations insisted upon by the Senate of Canada. The work of the Senate in recent years, to address all public and legal concerns with this legislation, has been valuable and is appreciated by those we represent.

Despite the above, Bill C-22 had become bogged down in the system and, despite the cooperative and earnest efforts of all those involved, continued to languish on the order papers. We wish to see the re-introduction of Bill C-22 (as it stood at dissolution) and expedient passage without further delays or newly conceived amendments. In saying this, we would specifically ask you to note that we have no objection to the Senate's proposed amendment pertaining to the protection of traditional aboriginal hunting and fishing practices. This amendment should be considered part of the proposals already on the table at dissolution and, as such, should be included so as to resolve the concerns raised by individuals such as Senator Watt.

It is our hope that the consensus that has already been achieved in Bill C-22 will result in the re-introduction and passage of this important legislation as rapidly as possible. The members of this coalition stand ready to assist you with the attainment of the aforementioned.

Respectfully Submitted,

British Columbia Cattlemen's Association
Canadian Animal Health Institute/Institut Canadien de la santé animal
Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions/Association Canadien des foires
et expositions
Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science/ L'Association Canadienne
pour la Science des Animaux de Laboratoire
Canadian Cattlemen's Association
Canadian Sheep Federation/Canadienne du mouton
Canadians for Health Research/Les Canadiens pour la recherche médicale
Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies/Les companies de
recherche pharmaceutique du Canada
Canada Mink Breeders Association
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association/L'Association Canadienne des
Médecins Vétérinaires
Dairy Farmers of Canada/Les Producteurs laitiers du Canada
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Fur Council of Canada/Conseil Canadien de la Fourrure
Fur Institute of Canada/Institut de la fourrure du Canada
Manitoba Cattle Producers' Association
North American Equine Ranching Information Council

Ontario Farm Animal Council, (OFAC)
on behalf of its founding members organizations:
Chicken Farmers of Ontario
Dairy Farmers of Ontario
Ontario Egg Producers
Ontario Cattlemen's Association
Ontario Institute of Agrologists
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Ontario Pork
Ontario Turkey Producers Marketing Board

Ontario Fur Managers Federation
Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency
Ontario Veal Association

c.c Members of the Senate of Canada
 Members of the House of Commons