

Animal Welfare Groups Applaud Illinois Lawmakers For Upholding Ban on Wire Neck Snares

The Humane Society of the United States

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WASHINGTON – Today, the Illinois House of Representatives rejected an attempt to override Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich's veto of House Bill 1486, a bill that would have allowed the use of wire neck snares, by a decisive vote of 37-74. A coalition of animal welfare organizations representing more than 600,000 Illinois constituents applauded the landslide victory.

Sponsored by the Illinois Trappers Association, HB 1486 would have allowed trappers to use wire neck snares to strangle several species of fur-bearing animals -- also posing a danger to family pets and endangered species -- for the first time in a half century. Citing humane concerns, Gov. Blagojevich rightly vetoed this bill in August.

Stating that snares "cruelly kill animals," Gov. Blagojevich also said that he refused "to support this particularly gruesome hunting method that's been banned in Illinois for over fifty years."

Animal welfare organizations, including the Animal Protection Institute (API), the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), and Illinois Humane, thanked state lawmakers for rejecting the attempt to override Gov. Blagojevich's veto today.

"We praise state legislators for joining Governor Blagojevich in saying 'No' to the fur industry's attempts to further legalize a device that is known to cause immense pain and suffering to animals," says Camilla Fox, Director of Wildlife Programs for the Animal Protection Institute. "Illinois elected officials have made a clear statement that snares have no place in a humane and civilized world."

"With today's vote, our state representatives have ensured that public safety trumps a narrow interest that seeks to bring back an inhumane practice banned from this state years ago," said Jane McBride, President of Illinois Humane. "It is good common sense to oppose the placement of these indiscriminate, inhumane devices out on the land in this state."

Snares are generally made of a light wire cable looped through a locking device, and are designed to tighten around the neck or other body part as an animal struggles. The more the animal struggles, the tighter the noose becomes. While small victims may become unconscious in five to ten minutes, larger animals may suffer for hours or days.

Snares are notoriously indiscriminate and frequently capture non-target animals, including threatened and endangered species as well as domestic dogs and cats. Records obtained from state and federal wildlife agencies by API show that bald eagles, lynx, wolves, and other species listed under the Endangered Species Act have been injured and killed in snares.

"We are deeply grateful to Representatives Sara Feigenholtz and Daniel Burke, who spoke eloquently in opposition to HB 1486 on the floor of the House. These and other elected officials recognize the importance of keeping snares banned in Illinois to protect our pets from becoming entangled and killed in these barbaric devices," said Ledy VanKavage, Sr. Director of Legislation for the ASPCA.

"By letting Governor Blagojevich's veto stand, lawmakers have preserved five decades of humane wildlife law in Illinois and have chosen a public policy based on animal welfare rather than the commercial and

recreational killing of animals for their fur pelts," said Michael Markarian, Executive Vice President of The Humane Society of the United States. "We hope that today's decisive vote puts the snaring issue to rest."

About Illinois Humane

Illinois Humane is an Illinois not-for-profit based in Springfield, IL, focusing upon companion animal cruelty and neglect investigations, spay/neuter initiatives and assistance, and animal welfare community outreach, education and public advocacy. Illinois Humane seeks to raise standards of respect and care for all animals. For more information, visit www.illinoishumane.org.

About API

The Animal Protection Institute is a national non-profit animal advocacy organization with 80,000 members and supporters, working to end animal cruelty and exploitation through legislation, litigation, and public education. API also operates a 186-acre primate sanctuary near San Antonio, Texas that is home to over 400 rescued and retired snow monkeys, baboons, and vervets. For more information about API, API's Primate Sanctuary, and the organization's mission, campaigns, and activities, please visit: www.api4animals.org and www.BanCruelTraps.com

About the ASPCA

Founded in 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (ASPCA) was the first humane organization established in the Western Hemisphere and today has one million supporters. The ASPCA's mission is to provide an effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. The ASPCA® provides national leadership in humane education, government affairs and public policy, shelter support, and animal poison control. The NYC headquarters houses a full-service animal hospital, animal behavior center, and adoption facility. The Humane Law Enforcement department enforces New York's animal cruelty laws and is featured on the reality television series Animal Precinct on Animal Planet. Visit www.asPCA.org for more information.

About The HSUS

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization representing more than 9 million members and constituents. The non-profit organization is a mainstream voice for animals, with active programs in companion animals and equine protection, disaster preparedness and response, wildlife and habitat protection, animals in research and farm animal welfare. The HSUS protects all animals through education, investigation, litigation, legislation, advocacy, and fieldwork. The group is based in Washington and has numerous field representatives across the country. On the web at www.hsus.org.