

Sarah Mayer *Public Comment - Center for a Humane Economy*

LATE DIST # 3

From: Jacquelyne Alexander
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 7:53 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: FW: Noise abatement, anti-cockfighting ordinance
Attachments: SantaBarbaraJoanHartman.pdf

Please include with public comment for the 1/9 BOS Meeting.



one
COUNTY
one
FUTURE

Jacquelyne Alexander
Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
t: 805.568.2245 f: 805.568.2249
jalexander@countyofsb.org

Sign up for news and announcements from the County at www.countyofsb.org.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY: The information contained in this electronic message and any attachments to this message are intended for the exclusive use of the addressee(s) and may contain confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, or the person responsible for delivering the e-mail to the intended recipient, be advised you have received this message in error and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, or copying is strictly prohibited. Please notify the County of Santa Barbara immediately by replying to this email or calling (805)568-3404 and destroy all copies of this message and any attachments.

From: Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>
Sent: Sunday, January 7, 2024 12:38 PM
To: Jacquelyne Alexander <jalexander@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Fw: Noise abatement, anti-cockfighting ordinance

For public record

From: Wayne Pacelle <wayne@animalwellnessaction.org>
Sent: Sunday, January 7, 2024 11:41 AM
To: Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Noise abatement, anti-cockfighting ordinance

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

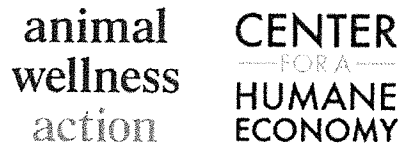
Dear Supervisor Hartman,

Thank you for your fantastic leadership on animal issues, including this noise abatement and anti-cockfighting ordinance. I am especially grateful that you are working closely with Paula Kislak on this issue.

Please let me know if I can help in any way. We are very excited about this ordinance.


Cockfighting is disgraceful and it has virtually no public support.

Wayne Pacelle, *President*




611 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E. #136
Washington, D.C. 20003


M 202-420-0446

 <https://www.facebook.com/wppacelle>

W AnimalWellnessAction.org

W CenterforaHumaneEconomy.org

 @WaynePPacelle

 wayneppacelle

Helping Animals Helps Us All.

CENTER
—FORA—
HUMANE
ECONOMY

January 5, 2023

The Honorable Joan Hartman
Third District
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Santa
Barbara, CA

Dear Supervisor Hartman,

As president of the Center for a Humane Economy, and former president and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States, I write in support of a proposed San Barbara County ordinance to restrict private ownership of large numbers of chicken roosters (*Gallus domesticus*). By adopting an ordinance of this kind, you and the other Supervisors are embracing the most effective policy response to illegal cockfighting in California. You'll combat animal cruelty in its first stage of development and abate unyielding noise disturbances for homeowners near gamecock yards.

Other counties in southern California have enacted ordinances of this type. The counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura counties have all unanimously adopted similar measures, taking effective action to drive cockfighters from their jurisdictions.

In 2017, in rural Val Verde in Los Angeles County, sheriffs' deputies raided a cockfighting "stable" with nearly 8,000 fighting roosters – the largest-ever cockfighting bust in U.S. history. Hundreds of cockfighters throughout the Southland brought 10 to 100 birds housed at this massive stabling operation. They did so because their counties banned the possession of large numbers of roosters, and they sought a nearby hideaway. If Santa Barbara does not act to address illegal cockfighting, this sort of stabling operation and resettlement strategies are likely to expand in your jurisdiction.

Even though federal law makes cockfighting a felony on every inch of U.S. soil, and every state has a statute against the practice, enforcement actions against cockfighting are spotty, and cockfighting crimes remain widespread. Cockfighters maintain large gamecock yards under the pretense of maintaining "show birds" and clandestinely fight these animals in the United States and even to as many as 25 nations. Mexico and the Philippines are the largest two destinations for U.S.-produced fighting birds.

No legitimate reason exists for anyone to maintain 10, 50, 100, 250, or 2,000 roosters at a gamecock farm. These aggregations, with breeds of Kelsos, Sweaters, Hatches, and other breeds used for fighting, are raised for one purpose: animal combat.

There is no mistaking these birds for broiler birds used for meat or laying hens used for egg production or pets. The birds look different, are housed differently, and behave differently. No agricultural operations are dominated by male chickens.

I urge you to keep these points in mind as you consider the ordinance.

- Staged fights involve pitting specially bred and trained animals against each other for illegal gambling. The animals are often drugged to heighten their aggression and forced to keep fighting even after they've suffered grievous injuries such as broken bones, deep gashes, flesh tears,

punctured lungs, and pierced eyes. In cockfighting, birds have sharp metal weapons attached to their legs to enhance bloodletting.

- Cockfighting is a massive, underground, worldwide form of organized crime. Last year, there was \$13.7 billion wagered on cockfights conducted in the Philippines. Even as cockfighting generated billions in online gaming in his country, former Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte issued a temporary ban on online betting at cockfights after dozens of people were kidnapped and never heard from again in the country. One woman who had unpaid gambling debts accrued through online cockfights reportedly sold her child to pay off her debts.
- A Philippines-based television network in 2020 released 50 videos showing two hosts making visits to these cockfighting complexes in the United States, where the American cockfighters touted the bloodlines of their fighting birds, with some of the animals destined for big global events such as the “World Slasher Derby” in Manilla. One Alabama-based cockfighting operator told the Filipino television broadcaster that he sells 6,000 birds a year to Mexico alone for as much as \$2,000 a bird, generating millions in illegal sales.
- Cockfighting is entangled with gangs and cartels, gambling, drug trafficking, illegal weapons dealing, public corruption, and various violent crimes, including homicide, child abuse, and human trafficking. There was a shooting at a Dallas cockfight last spring. A month later, there was a mass shooting in Hawaii that left two dead and three wounded. Other incidents include a referee murdered at an illegal cockfight in Miami. In Oregon, in August 2023, a cockfighting and drug syndicate was involved with human trafficking. In Mexico in 2022, in a case of gang violence, there were 20 people massacred at a cockfighting derby, including a Chicagoan visiting Mexico.
- Gamefowl are high-risk disease vectors and reservoirs because they are reared outdoors under poor biosecurity, widely sold, traded, and deliberately comingled with other birds to fight derbies under stressful conditions. As such they put legitimate poultry-rearing and agricultural practices at risk. Cockfighters engage in particularly risky handling practices, stirring them to fight after they are injured in the pits and even exchanging bodily fluids. Avian Influenza (AI) and virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) can infect commercially raised poultry, while AI can mutate and threaten human health.
 - A) Virulent Newcastle Disease has entered the United States through illegal smuggling of infected cockfighting roosters from Mexico at least ten times, causing particularly expensive epidemics in southern California in the early 1970s (at an inflation adjusted cost of \$337 million), in 2002-03 (at an inflation-adjust cost of \$246 million), and a massive outbreak in 2018-20 (at a very conservative cost estimate of \$72 million), collectively resulting in the killing of at least 16 million birds that required massive remuneration of owners of commercial poultry flocks and other birds.
 - B) As of August 18, 2023, the ongoing U.S. Dec 2021-present bird flu epidemic has killed 58.79 million poultry in 325 commercial flocks and 514 backyard flocks, and countless wildfowl in all states except Hawaii. This will be the most expensive animal disease outbreak in U.S. history, costing billions of dollars to (so far unsuccessfully) extirpate the virus while inflating consumer prices for eggs and poultry.
 - C) When H5N1 bird flu first emerged in southeast Asia in the early 2000s – with a 53 percent mortality rate for infected people -- cockfighters played a role in viral spread and

spillover. It can do the same here in the U.S., threatening to impose billions in costs and threatening bird health and human well-being.

- Cockfighters commonly engage in the illegal killing of raptors and other migratory birds as a form of predator control conducted to protect their illegal possession of fighting birds. Their fighting birds are tethered outside, making them especially vulnerable to hawks, eagles, and owls. The federal charges against a cockfighting family in Alabama convicted of cockfighting crimes in 2022 involved killing owls in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Even after Oklahoma voters outlawed cockfighting by a ballot initiative, 31 cockfighters were cited a year later for killing migratory birds. A California major poaching ring involving 21 individuals was also involved in illegal cockfighting.

For all these reasons, I urge you to adopt this ordinance. I am grateful for your efforts to put this issue on the agenda of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. We are happy to provide any background information you seek.

Sincerely,

Wayne Pacelle
President