



## Alliance for Progressive Values

*Giving Your Values a Voice!*

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July 21, 2011  
Dear Member of Congress:

The Alliance for Progressive Values supports the introduction and urges the passage of H.R. 2492, the “Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act of 2011”.

Introduced by Representative Thomas Marino (PA 10th) and Representative Betty Sutton (OH 13th), H.R. 2492 would prohibit knowing attendance at an animal fighting event and causing a minor to be present at such an event. While fighting animals is repugnant and criminal in and of itself, there is strong evidence that organized fighting events are part of a wider criminal subculture encompassing guns, gambling, illegal drugs and gang activity. A 2007 study by the Chicago Police Department found strong correlations between animal fighting and other criminal enterprises. Animal abusers, including dog fighters, are far more likely to be involved in other serious crimes. [“68 percent of Chicago’s animal crime offenders have also been arrested for narcotics crimes; 59 percent of them have been arrested for using or carrying a firearm”.](#)

While it is already illegal to sponsor or exhibit an animal in a fighting event, H.R. 2492 goes further in making it a federal crime punishable by a fine and up to one (1) year in prison to attend such events. This is an important addition to the current law. Police departments report that organizers and owners of the animals in the fights often melt away into the crowd when authorities arrive and thus avoid arrest. This law makes everyone in attendance culpable and will help in speeding investigations and catching ringleaders. The proposed law would also make it a crime punishable by a fine and up to three (3) years in prison to bring a minor to such events. There is evidence that animal fighting is used as a means of desensitizing children to violence and inculcating them into criminal behaviors and culture.

H.R. 2492 gives authorities another tool against animal abusers and in the battle against the criminal subculture that animal fighting is often a part of. The Alliance for Progressive Values commends Representatives Marino and Sutton on introducing this important legislation and urges its passage.

Sincerely,  
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