

THOUGHTS ABOUT PAWS

It is absurd for Congress to decide that it can design a "one-size fits all" piece of legislation, which will have any measurable effect upon the humane treatment of animals. If there is one fact that stands out in the record of recent legislation it is that adding new laws and new layers of enforcement has very little effect upon the goals of that legislation, no matter how humane and worthy those goals may be.

Redundant legislation written from Washington, D.C. results in great expense to the taxpayers and a loss of resources to local agencies already struggling to provide essential services to their constituencies. Further, for Congress to involve the bulk and ineptness of the federal government and its agencies in local affairs will result once more in the frequent misapplication and misdirection of the law and general chaos. There are more than adequate laws on the books of local governments in this Republic to satisfy all the goals of this legislation. What Congress needs to do is to provide better financial support to and less misdirected interference with local governments in their efforts to enforce the humane and rational treatment of animals. When the federal government extends its sticky fingers into those affairs, which are best handled at the local and state level, the result is inefficiency, uneven and unfair enforcement, and horrendous misuse of tax funds.

There is nothing wrong with the goals of this bill. All animal lovers hope for the humane treatment of every creature. The scandal of this bill is that it will do nothing to bring about better treatment of animals on the part of those who engage in acts of cruelty, neglect and abuse. It will hamper the efforts of rescue groups, restrict the operations of caring and legitimate hobby breeders, and bungle the efforts of local authorities to enforce the perfectly adequate local laws and restrictions.

It is apparent to taxpayers everywhere that this Congress is grossly profligate with the funds which we have entrusted you to spend wisely; that this Congress would rather muddle and interfere with local agencies and local statutes than provide them with any meaningful support; and that this Congress would rather distract the public from issues critical to the survival of the Republic by playing up emotional themes which are not in the remotest relevant to the survival of the Republic. There are huge problems begging for solutions at the federal level. However, one easily concludes that the Senate of the United States would rather drag red herrings across the field of its legislative agenda in order to distract the voters from the Senate's piddling efforts in these major areas of concern. The Congress has items that are more important on its agenda than the PAWS bill. Why are you wasting your energy and our taxes and patience with this ill conceived and redundant piece of legislative trivia? If you want to advance the cause of the humane treatment of our animals, start supporting the states and local government in their efforts to enforce local codes, regulations, and laws. And, for all our sakes, begin to deal in a courageous and forthright manner with the issues critical to our national security.

When you return home to tell your constituents how you have done them great service and benefit, will you be saying how you have enacted a wonderful law that will tell Mrs. Brown how many kittens she is allowed to raise? Or, will you be able to tell your constituents that you have enacted legislation which will improve immigration policy, strengthen the economy, improve our standing in international relations, bring equity to the tax structure, improve the capacity of state and local governments to function, ease the hardship of the elderly and impoverished, improve the delivery of medical services, rebuild the decaying infrastructure of the nation, and attend to the delivery and distribution of energy? You will face the most critical question of all. How significantly have you improved the security of the Nation?

When you can answer all these questions to the satisfaction of your constituents, then perhaps you can look into trying to improve the breeding and rearing practices of Mrs. Brown who has been lovingly, intelligently and most humanely breeding cats these many years without any interference from Washington D.C.

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August 20, 2005