



AB 611: ANIMAL ANTI-SEXUAL ABUSE ASSEMBLYMEMBER ADRIN NAZARIAN

Bill Summary:

AB 611 would repeal current law, which classifies sexual assault on an animal, otherwise known as bestiality, as a misdemeanor, and instead make it illegal to engage in sexual activity with an animal and the trafficking of animals for the purposes of financial gain.

Background:

California Penal Code §286.5 makes it a misdemeanor for an individual to sexually assault an animal. The law only prohibits sexual assault with an animal, but not other acts related to sexual assault—a major loophole in the law that has caused local authorities difficulty in achieving convictions.

In addition, California's animal cruelty law only applies in cases where there is provable physical injury to the animal. Many acts of animal sexual abuse are filmed and discovered well after the incident occurs, so the requisite demonstrable harm to the animal or medical evidence to substantiate physical injury cannot be recovered.

Finally, similar to human trafficking victims, animals are trafficked, sold, and traded for sex. Trafficking animals for sex and financial gain is not explicitly prohibited under California law

Animal sexual abuse is the single strongest predictor of increased risk for committing child sexual abuse. In a study of over 44,000 adult male sex offenders, researchers concluded that animal sexual abuse is the number one risk factor.

Some studies have found high rates of sexual assault of animals in the backgrounds of serial sexual homicide perpetrators. This is one reason why bestiality and other forms of animal cruelty are now tracked by the FBI as a Group A offense in the National Incident Based

Reporting System, the same category as rape and murder.

Solution:

AB 611 addresses these issues by prohibiting engaging in sexual contact with animals with any part of theCaInterns@afscme.org body or an object and prohibiting profiting on using animals for sex. Additionally, AB 611 requires that if a person were convicted, the courts are to order the convicted person to refrain from contact with animals, surrender any animals in their possession, and obtain a psychological assessment.

AB 611 does exempt standard veterinary procedures, accepted animal husbandry and animal care, artificial insemination, and conformation judging. This bill does include a provision requiring a veterinarian to report sexual abuse if the individual reasonably believes the animal to have been sexually abused. Passage of this bill will signal that California will not tolerate those who sexually abuse animals.

Support:

The Humane Society of the United States
(Sponsor)
Social Compassion in Legislation

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