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Alliance releases report from 2018 Taking Action for Animals Conference
Speakers discuss strategies and tactics to advance animal rights through legislation

July 31, 2018 – The Animal Agriculture Alliance released a report today detailing observations from the Taking Action for Animals Conference, held July 20 – 23 in Arlington, Va. The event was organized by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

“Farmers, ranchers and food companies are under constant pressure from animal rights activist groups who want to eliminate meat, dairy and eggs from everyone’s plate,” said Kay Johnson Smith, Alliance president and CEO. “HSUS may not seem as extreme as many activist groups, but they share the same vegan agenda. We hope this report along with our report from the 2018 National Animal Rights Conference will help farmers, ranchers, veterinarians and all those dedicated to providing a safe food supply prepare for activist tactics and threats. Likewise, we hope they shed light on groups that fundraise on pets to help consumers better understand their true agenda.”

Speakers at the conference focused on how to work with legislators on passing bills that make raising livestock and poultry more difficult for farmers and ranchers. **“We are reaching in our toolbox and using everything we can,”** said Kitty Block, HSUS acting president and CEO. **“The single most important thing you can do is build a relationship with your legislator,”** added Kristen Tullo, HSUS Pennsylvania state director. **“We all want more laws for animals,”** said Carol Misseldine, HSUS senior director of grassroots and engagement.

Local county and city officials should be prepared for increased efforts by activists as attendees at the conference were urged to take legislative action at the local level to build momentum for their state. **“You can change the world with local ordinance,”** Misseldine said. Attendees were advised to stay focused on a single issue when meeting with their representative, yet were also encouraged to join forces with environmental activists.

Attendees were also urged to reach across party lines on animal-related issues with speakers saying, **“The term Democrat or Republican doesn't really mean anything”** (Joe Trippi, TNR Campaigns). **“Over time, we will win, and the animals will win,”** Trippi added. **“You're not going to agree with someone one hundred percent of the time,”** said Stephen Borg, a former congressional staffer now with The Keelan Group. **“This is a marathon, not a sprint,”** added Borg.

Another topic discussed at this year’s conference was enacting change through corporate engagement. **“We can do far more by engaging institutions,”** said Kristie Middleton, HSUS managing director for farm animal protection and formerly with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Middleton discussed how it's easier to persuade a food director to change a menu

for what thousands of people eat than trying to persuade individuals on the street to go vegan. "**Be relentless and try to get these institutions to a 'yes'**," Middleton added.

The 2018 Taking Action for Animals Conference Report, which includes personal accounts of speaker presentations and general observations, is available to Alliance members in the Resource Library on the Alliance website. The Alliance also has reports from previous animal rights conferences accessible to members on its website.

Media wishing to obtain copies of the full report, or for all other inquiries, please contact Casey Kinler, communications manager, at ckinler@animalagalliance.org.

About the Alliance:



The [Animal Agriculture Alliance](#) is an industry-united, nonprofit organization that helps bridge the communication gap between farm and fork. We **connect** key food industry stakeholders to arm them with responses to emerging issues. We **engage** food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture. We **protect** by exposing those who threaten our nation's food security with damaging misinformation.

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