

STAND UP FOR FARMERS!’ RALLY, ORGANIZED BY MISSOURI FARMERS CARE, DRAWS HUNDREDS

Diverse Crowd Rallies Behind Missouri Solution

On April 21st at 5:00pm, the south lawn of the Missouri Capitol teemed with nearly 1,300 pro-agriculture supporters. The rally, organized by Missouri Farmers Care, focused on the joint efforts of Governor Jay Nixon, Missouri legislative leaders, agriculture advocates and animal welfare experts to craft a “Missouri Solution” for the problems caused by Proposition B.

“Today, hundreds of Missourians travelled to the Capitol to let their leaders know that Missourians won’t stand idly by as **big-money, special interest groups attack our farm families**,” explained Don Nikodim, chair of Missouri Farmers Care. “That’s why Senate Bill 113 and the Missouri Solution are so important. We have to protect agriculture from radical groups like HSUS.”

The highlight of the rally came when Jon Hagler, head of the Missouri Department of Agriculture, announced Governor Nixon’s support for a “Missouri Solution” that will fix Proposition B. The result of an agreement between Missouri’s agriculture community and local animal welfare advocates, the “Missouri Solution” will ensure that dogs and puppies receive the treatment and care they deserve, while preserving Missouri jobs and protecting Missouri farmers.

“We’re proud that Governor Nixon is standing with us against radical outside interests like HSUS,” Nikodim said. “The Missouri Solution is a clear example of what can happen when we all work together. Missouri’s farmers, pet providers and animal welfare experts all support this agreement that eliminates cruelty while protecting our homes, farms and jobs.”

The “Missouri Solution” proposal will complement Senate Bill 113, sponsored by Senator Mike Parson (R-Bolivar), which improves enforcement of current animal cruelty laws, strengthens standards for animal shelters, cracks down on unlicensed breeders and removes controversial provisions hidden in Prop B that threatened animal agriculture in Missouri.

Also speaking at the event were; **House Speaker Steve Tilley (R-Perryville), Senate Pro Team Rob Mayer (R-Dexter), Senator Mike Parson (R-Bolivar), Senator Brian Munzlinger (R-Williamstown), Veterinarian Dr. Alan Wessler and local farmer Chris Chinn. The event was emceed by Missouri Farmers Care Chair, Don Nikodim.**

“It was inspiring to look out and see so many people coming together to fight for our farms and our families,” Nikodim concluded. “We sent a strong message today that Missouri will continue to stand strong against radical outside interests like HSUS that threatens our homes, our jobs and our values.”

www.mofarmerscare.com

Some comments from the HumaneWatch.org website: www.humanewatch.org

“According to the Columbia Missourian, only about 100 HSUS supporters showed up to object to Governor Nixon’s compromise. And judging from a YouTube video shot by someone on the scene, 100 is a charitable estimate.”

It should be expected that Missouri farmers would have a significant amount of Missouri support. But both rallies were held in Jefferson City, an area where voters approved HSUS’s Prop B. (The measure was crushed in rural areas.) The fact that so few of those urban voters showed up to a relatively convenient location speaks volumes. The low turnout was a huge embarrassment for HSUS. But several months after the election, farmers and other HSUS opponents are still fired up. HSUS had a chance to

show politicians that week that it could do more than simply pour out-of-state money into local politics. On this count, it failed miserably. It's easy to get voters to check a box for a measure that's marketed with pictures with puppies. But it's harder to generate genuine grassroots support for a mission that touches people's lives and livelihoods. It's clear that while HSUS won the November election battle (however narrowly), it's losing the war with fired-up farmers. *From the Humanewatch.org website.*