



Press Release from November 9, 2010:

The Animal Agriculture Alliance is disappointed that yet another state has fallen victim to legislation introduced by animal rights extremists. Despite opposition from 103 of the state's 116 districts, an expensive campaign to regulate dog breeders in Missouri led by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) narrowly succeeded on November 2.

This was the smallest margin of victory that HSUS has experienced thus far at the ballot box. It is clear that HSUS was only able to force the measure through by capitalizing on the misconceptions and fears of urban voters.

**From the Missouri Farm Family Agriculture Alliance:**

*"Proposition B might seem like an honorable effort to save puppies across Missouri, but this is the unfortunate reality: HSUS wants to put an end to animal agriculture. States like California and Ohio have learned the hard way. By opening the door to regulatory controls over one element of animal agriculture, HSUS quickly and powerfully moved in to attempt controls over all animal agriculture."*

Missouri's agriculture community collaborated with pet enthusiasts to help voters understand the threat that measures promoted by animal rights extremists pose. However, their grassroots effort could not counteract the expensive advertising campaign proponents used to target the urban population.

"Missourians for the Protection of Dogs" relied on funds from out-of-state interest groups to mislead voters. According to *The Columbia Missourian*, as of September 27, HSUS had supplied \$1.16 million of the campaign's total \$2.3 million budget.

**From the Missouri Farm Bureau:**

*"The passage of Proposition B is disappointing because it will put licensed reputable dog breeders out of business, not those that are unlicensed and raise dogs in unsanitary conditions. With Proposition B passing and practically all proponents' funding coming from out-of-state individuals and organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States, Missouri farmers and ranchers are concerned that animal agriculture will be the next targets of the radical animal rights agenda."*

Will the passing of Proposition B improve animal welfare in Missouri? The measure represents a slippery slope that farmers and ranchers must be wary of. Animal Rights organizations such as HSUS will only be satisfied when animal agriculture is entirely eliminated. The agriculture community need only look to

the experiences of other targeted states--such as **California** and **Ohio**—to learn the consequences of animal rights legislative campaigns.

The *Mutts* comic strip that ran in the **November 4<sup>th</sup>** *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* revealed that HSUS' agenda is not limited to imposing restrictions on dog breeders. The comic's artist, Patrick McDonnell, sits on the organization's **board of directors**. He has passed used his comic strip as a political tool to advocate for other animal rights initiatives that have led to dire consequences for farmers and ranchers, such as California's Proposition 2.

While the emotional images used by animal rights campaigns can be confusing, the public should not allow itself to be hoodwinked by misleading claims of activists groups that do not believe consumers have the right to eat meat, milk or eggs. Farmers and Ranchers practices are based on years of experience, as well as ongoing research to understand animal behavior and their needs.

#### **From the Missourians for Animal Care:**

*"While the election is over, efforts to expose HSUS and their manipulative animal rights agenda have just begun. Missouri farmers care about producing safe and affordable food. We will continue to ensure our industry and out food supply is managed by the hands of farmers and not the bank accounts of outside interests."*

Agriculture has much to learn from Proposition B's disappointing results. Farmers and Ranchers in every state must act now to protect their livelihoods by forming or strengthening state agriculture coalitions and building relationships with other related industries. Proactive community outreach efforts should utilize a variety of tactics, including traditional and social media, to reach urban consumers.

Agriculture groups must understand that the threat to their way of life—and to our nation's food security—is far from over.

#### Resources:

- **Farm Animal Care Programs**
- **Agriculture's Commitment to Animal Well-Being**

#### About the Alliance:

The **Animal Agriculture Alliance**, a 501 ©(3) non-profit organization, is a broad-based coalition of individual farmers, ranchers, producer organizations, suppliers, packer-processors, scientists, veterinarians, and retailers. The Alliance's mission is to communicate the important role of animal agriculture to our nation's economy, productivity, vitality and security. The Alliance shows how animal well-being is central to producing safe, high-quality, affordable food and other products essential to our daily lives. *Reprinted with permission from the Animal Agriculture Alliance. [www.animalagalliance.org](http://www.animalagalliance.org).*