



New York Farm Bureau
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MEMORANDUM OF OPPOSITION

Assembly Bill 317 (Assemblywoman Rosenthal) / Senate Bill 2558 (Senator Golden)

AN ACT TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE LAW, IN RELATION TO THE CREATION OF AN ANIMAL CRUELTY AND ANIMAL FIGHTING DATABASE

Date: 3/17/2017

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest agricultural advocacy organization, opposes this legislation. NYFB does not tolerate animal cruelty, and family farmers would not be in the business of caring for livestock animals if they did not have a desire to work with and care for animals appropriately.

Through this bill, individuals convicted of animal cruelty, animal fighting, animal neglect, animal abandonment and mistreatment of animals would have their names and crimes listed in a database. It would also include the names of individuals charged with these crimes, but who have pled guilty to other charges instead. The database would be available to all law enforcement entities, district attorneys, duly incorporated humane societies, societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, dog or cat protective associations and animal control officers.

Providing the names and specific acts of cruelty in a centrally located database raises privacy and safety concerns for farmers. The data will certainly be used to identify agriculture operations where animal cruelty occurred, especially in rural communities where people can easily identify where an individual is employed. This is especially troubling when an employee of the farm committed animal cruelty, but the action is not condoned by or accurately reflects the practices of the employer. We believe that the database will not provide proper context to protect the owners of the farm on which animal cruelty crimes are perpetrated. This could lead to misinterpretation of data, false assumptions and conclusions about an employer and the agriculture industry. It presents the opportunity for interest groups to mischaracterize and misuse this information to unfairly target farm operations.

New York Farm Bureau strongly supports the current penalties which exist for farm animal cruelty, that have been shown to be adequate and appropriately enforced through the years. As a result, New York Farm Bureau respectfully requests your opposition to this legislation.