



Arizona Legislative Candidate Questionnaire 2012

Candidate ___Lela Alston_____ Phone__602-278-2002 _____

Legislative Office: District__LD24_ House of Representatives __X__ Senate _____

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Animals play an important role in the lives of many Arizonans, who consistently demonstrate concern for animal protection. Humane-minded citizens of all political stripes care deeply about the positions their elected officials take on animal protection issues. Humane Voters of Arizona (HVA) appreciates your input on this 2012 State Candidate Questionnaire. HVA will be endorsing candidates for the upcoming primary and general elections based upon voting records and response to this questionnaire. HVA may also share questionnaire responses with other organizations that track and make endorsements.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Have you ever been involved in any animal protection issues?

Yes__X__ No___ Comments

Voted for the greyhound legislation last session.

Do you have, or have you had in the past, any companion animals that have had an impact on you?

Yes__X__ No___ Comments

I am currently sharing my home with Joe Biden and Bo Obama. Joe and Bo are my rescued Bichon Friese dogs. I love them very much and they bring enjoyment and company. I have had many animals over the years who were always family members. Bo joined Joe and I in June. I think he is great. Joe is not so sure.

Do you financially or philosophically support any local or national animal protection organizations? If so, which ones?

Yes__X__ No___ Comments

I have given small contributions over the years to the organizations that support animal protection including the Humane Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

ANIMAL CONTROL

ROADSIDE ANIMAL SALES

In 2008 the Arizona Legislature passed a bill prohibiting the public sale of animals, but the law applies only to counties with a population of more than 800,000. Yet animal control agencies and shelters in smaller counties report that unregulated public sale of animals is a significant burden for shelters, animals, and communities. Many animals sold on public streets are bred and raised in poor conditions. And since the animals are typically not spayed, neutered or vaccinated, they contribute to overpopulation, the euthanasia of thousands of homeless animals each year in Arizona shelters and the spread of disease. Roadside animal sales also increase costs of animal control, which places a financial burden on taxpayers.

Would you support legislation to expand the ban the roadside sale of animals statewide?

Yes No Comments

HOMELESS ANIMALS

Every year, tens of thousands of cats and dogs are killed in shelters throughout Arizona. Taxpayers bear the cost of picking up, housing, and ultimately euthanizing these homeless or unwanted animals. The pet overpopulation crisis is the direct result of irresponsible breeding and animals left unaltered in our communities.

Would you be willing to work with animal control agencies and/or shelters in your district to address problems related to the homeless animal crisis?

Yes No Comments

WILDLIFE AND HABITAT

ARIZONA GAME & FISH COMMISSION

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission (AZGFC) is charged with managing and protecting Arizona's wildlife. It has five members who are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Arizona Senate. Each serves a five-year term, no two may be from the same county and only three may be members of the same political party. Each candidate must be well-informed on the subject of wildlife.

For decades, Arizona has had an appointment process through which applicants would apply directly to the governor's office. However, in 2009 the Arizona Legislature passed SB 1200, a measure that creates a recommendation board controlled by ranchers and clubs who represent less than 1% of Arizona hunters and anglers to appoint candidates to the AZGFC. The governor is required to select only board-endorsed candidates.

SB 1200 was opposed by the AZGFC and many diverse hunting, conservation, and animal protection organizations.

Do you support a process that includes less than 1% of hunters & anglers and limits the voice of a majority of Arizonans to control of the Arizona Game & Fish Commission appointment process?

Yes___ No__X__ Comments

Do you believe that SB 1200 should be repealed?

Yes__X__ No___ Comments

EXOTIC ANIMALS

Although the Arizona Game and Fish Department requires a license to possess great apes (chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans), there are no restrictions for owning the majority of dangerous primates. Monkeys, baboons, and other primates kept as pets can inflict serious injuries or even kill their owners or neighbors, and can transmit deadly diseases to people, such as hepatitis A, tuberculosis and the often fatal Herpes B virus.

Would you support legislation that would ban the private possession of all primates in Arizona?

Yes___ No___ Comments Probably. Would like more information.

CITIZENS' VOTING RIGHTS

Arizona's public initiative process is a constitutional right which was enacted at statehood in 1912. The first initiative was for women's suffrage, and it passed by a margin of greater than two to one that same year.

Arguably the most important tool for protecting Arizona's animals is the public initiative process. Thanks to grassroots citizens' ballot measures, cruel leg-hold traps were banned on public lands in 1994 and cockfighting was outlawed in 1998. In 2006, voters overwhelmingly approved an initiative that banned the cruel confinement of pregnant pigs and calves raised for veal.

In 2000 voters rejected a proposal that would have required a 2/3 majority to pass any initiative affecting wildlife. And in a landslide election in 2008, voters defeated a measure that would have deprived the majority of voters participating in an election of the right to decide ballot initiatives, virtually eliminating the citizen initiative process.

Do you support Arizona's public initiative process?

Yes No Comments

Enthusiastically!

Do you believe that the Legislature should NOT attempt to dismantle the constitutional voting rights of Arizona citizens?

Yes No Comments

Most enthusiastically!!!

Thank you for your time. Please return the completed questionnaire to:

Humane Voters of Arizona
Email to: HumaneVotersArizona@cox.net