



Arizona Legislative Candidate Questionnaire 2012

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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 ___ No Comments

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

Yes ___ No Comments

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

Yes No ___ Comments

I probably philosophically support all local and national animal protection organizations. Unfortunately, I don't have the time or the financial resources to support them all. Here is a partial, representative listing of the organizations that I do support: Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Save the Manatee Club, Nature Conservancy, ASPCA, Arizona RESCUE, Arizona Pug Rescue.

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

Until we have no more need for animal shelters or animal protection groups and agencies, the breeding and sale of animals should be very tightly regulated.

In related legislation, my opponent, John McComish, voted on 4.5.2012 in favor of HB2780 which exempts ranch dogs from animal cruelty laws. Cruelty is cruelty and should be illegal everywhere under any circumstance.

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

Irresponsible people are the cause of irresponsible breeding and unaltered animals, and I would like to see laws that would punish and effectively reduce the number of irresponsible perpetrators so that fewer and fewer innocent animals end up paying the price with their own suffering and deaths.

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 Comments

SB 1200 is designed to give power to people and groups who do not support the best interests of conservation and animal protection. Typically, when these groups have power, they do long-term and, too often, irreparable damage to our land and its wildlife.

Do you believe that SB 1200 should be repealed?

Yes No Comments

Hopefully, when the voting public is apprised of the negative impact of SB 1200 and of the crony process of board-endorsed candidates, the voting public will be outraged. This current legislature has garnered a great deal of public disapproval already for extreme legislation that includes sweeping Land Conservation funds, selling public lands, the Polluters' Protection Act, and much, much more.

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

It's difficult enough for zoological establishments with expert and trained personnel to create appropriate environments for primates.

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

We need an alternative process to legislation passed by our state legislature. Case in point: Proposition 204. Our current state legislature cut education budgets by more than \$2.5 billion, did nothing to create jobs or support our infrastructure, and defunded KidsCare so that there are now 105,000 kids without health insurance. Fortunately, Arizona voters appear to support Proposition 204 which, although it will retain a one-cent tax increase, is a tax increase that voters will support because they value what the state legislature obviously did not value. Without the public initiative process and the opportunity for the voters to implement their will in spite of an extremist-dominated legislature, we would be at the mercy of extremists' agendas.

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

Yes No Comments

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

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