



2020 State Candidate Survey

1. Pennsylvania is considered the “Puppy Mill Capital of the East” and this year, six PA dog breeding businesses made the Humane Society of the United States’ “Horrible Hundred” list, which names the hundred worst puppy mills in the country. Further adding to the problem, the PA Dog Law Bureau of Enforcement does not have proper funding. While two bills have been introduced to help fund Dog Law (HB 1277, which would take the judiciary out of the Dog Law Fund, and SB 663, which would raise the dog license fee), it is likely not enough.

Will you support (or have you supported) these two bills, and what other assistance can you offer to help fund Dog Law?

I would support these two bills. Using money from the licensing fee for kennels which is quite low could be raised by just \$25 per year to help defray the cost of the PA Dog Law Bureau of Enforcement.

What are your plans to eradicate puppy mills and unethical breeders in Pennsylvania?

I think taking legislators to a puppy mill or an unethical breeder’s location might shock them into voting for these two bills. If we couldn’t visit, pictures of unethical treatment should be sent to all members of the General Assembly who are questioning the need to eradicate puppy mills.

2. For decades, Pennsylvanians have been calling for an end to live pigeon shoots. We are the only state that still legally and openly holds these cruel killing contests. Year after year, a bill (SB 787 is the most recent) has been introduced to ban live pigeon shoots but has been denied a fair vote.

Will you support legislation to ban live pigeon shoots, and what can or will you do to ensure the bill receives a vote?

Yes I will support this legislation. I think visiting one of these shoots or providing pictures may be enough to change legislator's minds.

3. Zoonotic outbreaks, including HIV, Ebola, mad cow disease, avian flu, measles, smallpox, and COVID-19, have all spread through the confinement, slaughter, and/or consumption of animals. Research shows that factory farms, which are rampant in Pennsylvania, are breeding grounds for killer pathogens because of the animals' genetic similarities and the overcrowding of animals. While animal agriculture has long been hailed as the second largest contributor to human-made greenhouse gas emissions, our current crisis is revealing it to be a serious threat to public health, as well.

What measures will you take to ensure that factory farms in Pennsylvania are operating using the safest and most humane methods possible?

I would add language to existing laws to make penalties greater and make the offenses more specifically defined.

Will you support legislation to improve standards in factory farms, such as banning gestation crates and/or battery cages (means of keeping pigs and chickens so small that they do not have adequate space to even turn around)?

Yes I will support this legislation. Once again, increasing penalties and adding more specific language should make enforcement more rigorous.

4. Plastic pollution is a growing problem worldwide and in Western Pennsylvania. Humane Action Pittsburgh's No Plastic Please campaign works to end single-use plastic (i.e. straws, bottled water, throwaway plastic cutlery, and other items that are only used one time) wherever possible. Most of these items are not easily recyclable and are costing our region and the state millions of dollars to manage the contamination of recycling streams, litter pickup costs, and landfill tipping fees. The PA State Legislature has now twice passed a yearlong preemption rule that prevents PA communities from creating policies to manage this deluge of harmful plastic waste. This state preemption prohibits regulation, fees, or bans at the local level. Meanwhile, regulation in other states, including bottle-deposit systems, requirements for post-consumer plastic content in products, and targeted bans and fees, are helping other communities greatly reduce their plastic waste and shift to more sustainable, responsible use of plastic.

Do you support or oppose preemption, and what are your plans to reduce or eliminate single-use plastic in Western Pennsylvania?

I would oppose preemption at the local level. Making recycling more available at the community level would help. PRC provides glass recycling bins; I would meet with them to discuss how to best recycle plastic and facilitate that at the local community level. Education for the community on what is recyclable and how to use other methods of storage is being undertaken at the community level by groups like Sustainable Sewickley but needs backing from the state and local governments to become more widespread. Requiring manufacturers of plastic within the State of Pennsylvania to manufacture only plastics that are recyclable and make them returnable. Incentivize using easily recyclable glass bottles for beverages which can be used again or recycled is an idea I would like to bring back to beverage bottling industry.