

## Pro-Cockfighting Bills Protect Career Criminals, Promote Violent Crime

*HB 2530, SB 1006 Are Get Out of Jail Passes for Serial Felons*

**In the small number of cases where there has been enforcement of the state’s voter-approved anti-cockfighting law, prosecutors have used the meaningful and appropriate penalty provisions in the statute to take dangerous career criminals off the streets.** The six individuals in Oklahoma who have gone to jail or prison for cockfighting since enactment of the voter-approved law 20 years ago are serial felons, and their arrests remind us that cockfighting is typically bound up with other crimes, including money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and a range of violent crimes. Below we provide examples on the background of the people arrested for cockfighting.

- Robert Anthony Hurley got 10 years for cockfighting because he had 8 prior felonies, including lewd molestation, failure to register as a sex offender, and grand larceny.
- Joey Blancas also got a 10-year sentence after a series of crimes for drug dealing, illegal possession of firearms, burglary, grand larceny, and larceny of an automobile.  
(see below for more complete rundown of their prior felony convictions)

**While these prison terms were important in keeping Oklahoma safer from career criminals, the anti-cockfighting law approved by voters has not been sufficiently enforced. There have been only 29 enforcement actions related to cockfighting crimes (1.7/year) in 76 of the 77 counties between 2004 and 2022.**

- The rate of arrests, given the magnitude of illegal cockfighting activities in Oklahoma, demonstrates a near total breakdown in enforcement. There have been no arrests in an array of counties with extensive cockfighting, including Atoka, Coal, LeFlore, Marshall, and McCurtain. In Bryan County, the sheriff apprehended 200 people at an illegal cockfighting arena, but the D.A. brought just one charge and there was an inconsequential penalty.
- It’s important to note that SQ 687 (outlawing cockfighting and syncing up penalties with the state’s anti-dogfighting and general anti-cruelty law) does not impose mandatory-minimum penalties. It’s preposterous to suggest that the lack of enforcement is explained by the strong penalties in the law. For years, we’ve been told that police and prosecutors won’t make cases when the maximum penalty is a misdemeanor, because it’s not worth their time and effort in making a complex cockfighting prosecution. Enforcement failures are explained by a simple failure of some law enforcement officers to do their jobs or by public corruption.

**The proponents of SB 2530/SB 1006 are explaining that the purpose of the change to the law is to allow them to “sell birds overseas” and “make money by selling game stock.”**

- Any state lawmaker, or any cockfighting enthusiast, promoting the sale of fighting birds to other states or to territories or other nations is abetting a federal crime. The federal Animal Welfare Act makes it “unlawful for any person to knowingly sell, buy, possess, train, transport, deliver, or receive any animal for purposes of having the animal participate in an animal fighting venture” ([U.S.C. 2156](#) Section 26, Subsection b). Oklahoma and U.S. law are reinforcing, with both statutes banning possession of fighting birds. Gutting Oklahoma’s cockfighting does nothing to remedy a core problem that cockfighters face: federal law makes it a felony to possess fighting birds or to transport or ship them to any other jurisdiction.
- The backers of HB 2530 and SB 1006 raised birds trained to fight. They are different breeds than the birds raised for meat or eggs or any other legitimate purpose. No cockfighter is going to buy birds from cockfighters unless they come from fighting bloodlines and are winning cockfighting derbies. The Oklahoma Gamefowl Commission leaders are all known cockfighters and they are misrepresenting themselves by saying otherwise. .
- Take this example: The long-time Territorial Veterinarian for Guam – a Lawton-area native and retired Army Colonel - [assessed imports](#) of nearly 5,000 fighting birds from Oklahoma to that U.S. territory. He [attests](#) that there would be no other purpose for the shipment of these birds but fighting because the island has no show bird industry and no commercial broiler or laying hen industry. Animal Wellness Action has videos of cockfighters promoting the fighting prowess of their birds, along with corroborating information about their contraband.

**Robert Anthony Hurley:**

CF-2004-261 Lewd Molestation, convicted on 8/28/2006, Garfield County, OK

CF-2005-713 Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle, Kay County, OK

Several charges for failure to register as a sex offender, Kay County, OK

CF-2006-329 Grand Larceny, Kay County, OK

CF-2010-345 Cock Fighting (with eight prior felonies), Kay County, OK 10 years

Don't know what the eight felonies were; would suspect counts in the several felonies listed above.

**Joey Blancas:**

CF-2008-86 and CF-2012-133 Drugs, Haskell County, OK

CF-2008-118 Drugs, firearm and Cockfighting

CF 2010-110 Burglary and Grand Larceny

CF-2014-93 Larceny of an automobile

**Al Leonard Seastrom:**

No. CM-2019-00935 Trespassing after being forbidden

No. CM-2010-00044 DRIVING WHILE SUSPENDED/CANCELLED/REVOKED, A MISDEMEANOR, in violation of 47 OS 6-303(8) and FAILURE TO CARRY SECURITY VERIFICATION FORM, A MISDEMEANOR, in violation of 47 OS

No. CM-2010-00905 DOMESTIC ABUSE -ASSAULT & BATTERY, A MISDEMEANOR, in violation of 21 OS 644

No. PO-2011-00028 Protective Order: PROTECTIVE ORDER)

No. FD-2012-00312 Family and Domestic: CHILD SUPPORT)

No. SC-2013-00075 Small Claims: SMALL CLAIMS/MONEY JUDGMENT OVER 5000.00)

**David Roy Tune:**

No. CF-2011-2993 30 Counts against him - all guilty. Racketeering/Gambling/etc

No. CM-2014-00013(Criminal Misdemeanor)1. XDRIVING A MN UNDER INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL & DRUGS - A MISDEMEANORPOSSESSION OF CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE, in violation of 63 OS 2-401-2-420

No. PO-2001-00085 (Protective Order: PROTECTIVE ORDER)

No. CM-2003-00292 RECKLESSLY HANDLING FIREARM THREATENING ACT OF VIOLENCE SERIOUS BODILY HARM

No. CF-2011-00112 (Criminal Felony) CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT A FELONY OWN/POSSESS/KEEP/TRAIN BIRD FOR FIGHTING

No. CM-2016-00134 (Criminal Misdemeanor) DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED

No. CF-2019-00053 (Criminal Felony) DRIVING A MN W/UNDER INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL, 2ND AND SUBS.

**Justin James McHone:**

No. CF-2020-00026 {Criminal Felony) 10 Counts of Spectating a Cockfight

No. CPC-2013-5393 {Criminal Probable Cause) 1 count - no determination on OSCN

No. CF-2013-3588 (Criminal Felony) Count as Filed: LA3, Unauthorized Use of Vehicle, in violation of 47 O.S. 4-102

Date of Offense: 06/12/2013

**Marlee Dwalyn Freeman:**

No. PO-2006-00096 (Protective Order: PROTECTIVE ORDER)

No. CF-2015-00106 (Criminal Felony) 1. DRIVING WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL

No. PO-2017-00239 (Protective Order: PROTECTIVE ORDER)

No. CM-2017-01291 (Criminal Misdemeanor) DOMESTIC ABUSE -ASSAULT & BATTERY

No. PO-2018-00035 (Protective Order: PROTECTIVE ORDER)

No. CF-2018-00202 (Criminal Felony) BURGLARY, SECOND DEGREE UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA, in violation of 63 OS 2-405 PUBLIC INTOXICATION

No. CM-2018-00769 (Criminal Misdemeanor) TAMPERING WITH A VEHICLE

No. CF-2018-00309 (Criminal Felony) OWN/POSSESS/KEEP/TRAIN BIRD FOR FIGHTING KEEPING PLACE/EQUIPMENT/FACILITY FOR COCKFIGHTING POSSESSION OF CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE, in violation of 63 OS 2-401-2- 420