



July 28, 2023

Senator J.D. Vance
288 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Vance:

This letter is in support of efforts to pass Senate Bill 1529, *Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-Risk Trafficking Act*, and its House companion, H.R. 2742, collectively known as the FIGHT Act. Ohio Poultry Association members have a mission to produce safe and wholesome food. An important part of poultry and egg production is welfare of the birds in our care. Simply put – cockfighting is inconsistent with animal welfare. OPA and its members have long supported legislation to end this practice.

The Ohio Poultry Association (OPA) is the unified voice of Ohio's poultry industry. Ohio is the second largest egg producing state, is 7th in turkey production and has a growing broiler chicken industry. OPA is also the Official State Agency for the National Poultry Improvement Plan for the State of Ohio. We work daily, in conjunction with our farmers, to protect and promote the health of our state's flocks. Bird welfare is an important aspect of what we do.

Animal fighting fosters environments that pose significant risks to avian health with increased potential to spread disease. It undermines avian disease regulatory programs in which commercial and non-commercial poultry owners alike invest significant time and resources to protect their own flocks and those of their neighbors. Ensuring the health and welfare of our birds is our highest responsibility. Cockfighting has no place in any type of poultry or bird production or ownership.

Again, it comes down to one simple statement... ***Cockfighting is inconsistent with bird welfare.*** The amendments to the Animal Welfare Act proposed by the FIGHT Act will provide critical enforcement tools to further limit and discourage these activities which will protect our flocks and safeguard our communities. We strongly encourage your support for this effort.

Sincerely,

James H. Chakeres
Executive Vice President