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FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION

2617 Mahan Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32308
P.O. Box 12519 • Tallahassee, Florida 32317-2519

p: (850) 877-2165
f: (850) 878-8665
www.flsheriffs.org  

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Dear members of Congress:

The Florida Sheriffs Association supports H.R. 2742, the FIGHT Act, to crack down on the inhumane, illegal practices of cockfighting and dogfighting. Sheriffs work diligently to protect our communities, both human and animal, and we want to eliminate this form of organized crime and malicious animal cruelty.

The federal government can play an essential role in helping us enforce the laws to halt inhumane animal fights. These are often complex operations, requiring multiple agencies stretching across states, territories, and even nations. Sheriffs have finite resources and may be unable to conduct a complete investigation if an animal fighting ring stretches across county or state lines.

Despite being criminalized everywhere in the United States, staged animal fighting is startlingly widespread, including in the U.S. territories. The Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-Risk Trafficking (FIGHT) Act, amending Section 26 of the Animal Welfare Act and introduced by Representatives Don Bacon and Representative Andrea Salinas and Senator Cory Booker and Senator John Kennedy, in the Senate, would enhance enforcement capacity to root out illegal animal fighting enterprises by banning simulcasting and gambling of animal fighting ventures.

The bill would also end the shipment of mature roosters (chickens only) shipped through the U.S. mail and establish a citizen suit provision, after proper notice to federal authorities, to allow private right of action against illegal animal fighters and ease the resource burden on federal agencies.

Please support this valuable piece of legislation as we work collectively to keep our animals and communities safe.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Bill Leeper, Nassau County
President, Florida Sheriffs Association