

May 22, 2024

Dear District Attorney Handke,

I've been investigating illegal cockfighting in Oklahoma for decades. Lately, it seems that Carter County has become the hub of illegal cockfighting, not only in Oklahoma but in the US. As we have seen with arrests in Carter County over the past year, most perpetrators have been from out-of-state and out-of-country. I'm sure the residents of Carter County don't appreciate being host to cockfighting and its associated crimes. I urge you to nip this trend by punishing the offenders, especially the organizers, to the full extent. Cockfighting is a felony.

Animal fighting is a pre-meditated crime. Organizers and cockfight pit owners don't accidentally invite organized crime gangs to use their property for felony-level criminal activity. They make tens of thousands of illegal gambling dollars off each "derby", like the one in Wilson, that they organize. Unless they pay a significant price for their illegal activity they will, as we have seen, continue to bring in out-of-state criminals for cockfighting events.

Anthony DeVore, the frontman for the cockfighters group in Oklahoma, released a series of lie-filled videos this week targeting (by name) the deputies of the Carter County Sheriff's Office for making arrests at the cockfight near Wilson in April. This is inappropriate intimidation of law enforcement. I tipped off the Sheriff's Office about the cockfight in progress and am familiar with DeVore's intimidation tactics and lies. I will be in Court this Friday to watch the proceedings and I urge you to move swiftly to stop this scourge in Carter County.

Sincerely,



Kevin Chambers
Oklahoma State Director
Animal Wellness Action