



2024-05

**NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION ACKNOWLEDGES ANIMAL FIGHTING IS A CRIME OF VIOLENCE AND SUPPORTS STRONG PENALTIES**

**WHEREAS**, in 2016, the FBI included dogfighting and cockfighting in the National Incident Based Reporting System (Code 720) as a Crime against Society; classified with crimes like arson, burglary, and other property crimes; and

**WHEREAS**, dogfighting and cockfighting have links to crimes against people including, but not limited to, child abuse, murder, assault, theft, intimidation of neighbors and witnesses, and human trafficking; and

**WHEREAS**, animal fighting investigations have uncovered intricate criminal networks and connections to organized crime, trafficking narcotics, illegal firearms, and attempted bribery of elected officials; and

**WHEREAS**, dogfighting and cockfighting events present a danger to responding officers due to the often-large numbers of attendees, many of whom are armed; and

**WHEREAS**, people who participate in animal fighting often engage children in illegal activity causing them to witness or participate in violence; and

**WHEREAS**, well-funded pro-dogfighting and pro-cockfighting organizations donate to the campaigns of elected officials, hire professional lobby firms, and attempt to influence legislators to prevent the passage of new laws or amend existing laws to reduce penalties and/or decriminalize animal fighting crimes altogether;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the National Sheriffs' Association supports Representative Bacon H.R. 2742 and Senator Kennedy S. 1529 bills to end this hideous so-called sport, and urges the nation's state, local, and federal governments to condemn dogfighting and cockfighting in the strongest terms possible by passing and maintaining penalties for the crimes;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the National Sheriffs' Association urges law enforcement and prosecutors to join with the nation's Sheriffs in working collaboratively to combat animal fighting.