

A close-up photograph of a deer's head, showing its eye, ear, and fur texture. The deer is looking slightly to the left. The background is blurred.

animal wellness action

2019

ANNUAL REPORT

Helping animals by
promoting legal
standards forbidding
cruelty.

INTRODUCTION

Any serious-minded social movement must have a sophisticated political arm that turns ideas into policy and that gets involved in elections (for candidates and issues). Animal Wellness Action (AWA), just two years old, exists to create that capacity.

We have a national lobbying team, 10 state directors, a legal affairs team, and a growing international program. We have one of the most active Political Action Committees on Capitol Hill that is focused exclusively on animal protection. AWA also has two sister organizations – the Animal Wellness Foundation and the Center for a Humane Economy – and our work is closely synched up with theirs, adding synergies to help all animals.

Led by former Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson and former Oregon District Attorney Josh Marquis, our [National Law Enforcement Council](#) is nearly a 30-member group of law enforcement leaders working with our larger team in promoting policies against animal mistreatment and enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. Our [National Veterinary Council](#) extends the reach of the organization's branding, programs, and priorities and put vets in the forefront of the animal protection movement.

Animal Wellness Action spent approximately 90% of its resources on programs and only 10% on fundraising and administration. Nearly 100% of dollars raised for our PAC goes directly to candidates who support animal welfare, regardless of their party affiliation.



Founder, Animal Wellness Action



Executive Director



GETTING CONGRESS TO ACT ON ANIMAL ISSUES

Since December 2018, Animal Wellness Action has been instrumental in passing these five federal bills that have been signed into law:

The Parity in Animal Cruelty Enforcement (PACE) Act

to ban cockfighting and dogfighting everywhere in the United States, including in the five major U.S. territories.

The Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act

to create, for the first time ever, a federal anti-cruelty statute.

The Dog and Cat Meat Trade Prohibition Act

a measure to ban any sale of dog and cat meat in the U.S.

The Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act

to broaden the definition of stalking to include conduct that causes a person to experience a reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury to his or her pet.

The Rescuing Animals With Rewards (RAWR) Act

a program to provide rewards for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of people involved with illegal wildlife trafficking.

GETTING CONGRESS TO ACT ON ANIMAL ISSUES

These are all pathbreaking laws, and AWA was in the thick of passing every one of them. In 2019, we also played a central role in securing House action on two other major efforts, and in 2020, we plan on working to get these measures through the Senate.

Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act

The U.S. Senator Joseph D. Tydings Memorial Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act seeks to fortify the federal law against the “soring” of show horses—using caustic chemicals and other painful substances to injure the horses’ hooves and legs to induce a high-stepping gait. The House passed the bill with 333 votes in 2019, and we have more than half of all Senators as cosponsors of the Senate companion bill. We just need a vote in that chamber. (Our executive director, Marty Irby, was the former president of the Tennessee Walking Horse trade group and had an insider’s view of this industry, exposing the cruelty built into the enterprise).

The Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act

The Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act would halt the trade in fins for soup. A key Senate Committee has approved the bill, and the House passed its bill with more than 300 votes at our urging. We know that there are still tens of millions of sharks killed every year globally just for their fins.

**Senate committee approves bill
to ban shark fin sales.**



SECURING ENFORCEMENT OF OUR FEDERAL ANTI-CRUELTY LAWS

That's also why we work so hard to enforce our federal laws against animal cruelty.

We've been leading the fight to enforce the newly imposed federal ban on animal fighting, which took effect in December 2019. In the run-up to that law taking effect, we conducted a detailed investigation of cockfighting on Guam, exposing more than 500 illegal shipments of fighting animals to the island between 2017-2019. That ban has so far been upheld in federal court, in the face of challenges from the cockfighting community. AWA is intervening in all of these federal court cases.

We have announced a rewards program to crack down on illegal animal fighting and other forms of animal cruelty.

We are pushing for millions in new federal dollars for enforcement and implementation for all the federal anti-cruelty laws, including a new \$2 million in funding for 2020 for implementing the PAWS Act. AWA conceived of and won a House amendment to seek \$2 million for an "Animal Cruelty Crimes" unit at the Department of Justice, and we won language in the Senate spending bill to compel DOJ to step up enforcement.

The Rescuing Animals With Rewards (RAWR) Act is a program to provide rewards for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of people involved with illegal wildlife trafficking and poaching.



We are working to enact federal anti-cruelty policies to help domesticated and wild animals.

STOPPING OTHER FORMS OF ANIMAL ABUSE

We are stopping greyhound racing in its tracks. Working with GREY2K USA Worldwide, we were at the center of a successful negotiation in October 2019 to phase out greyhound racing by 2022 in Arkansas. In 2019, we began work on a federal bill to ban greyhound racing in the United States.

We are fighting wildlife trafficking and trophy hunting. We pushed a winning amendment to bar the Department of the Interior from issuing import permits for elephants or lions from Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and are pushing a number of bills to stop wildlife trafficking. We are working to restore Botswana's ban on trophy hunting of elephants, lions, and other wildlife.

We are protecting wolves from human killing. With our partners at the [Center for a Humane Economy](#), we led the push to get Washington Governor Jay Inslee to intervene and demand his Department of Fish and Wildlife stop killing wolves and use non-lethal methods instead. We also played a major role in publicly opposing federal de-listing of wolves across their range in the lower 48 states, taking out a full-page advertisement in the New York Times and generating tens of thousands of comments from Americans to oppose federal efforts to strip protections for wolves.

We are stopping wildlife contest killing. AWA staff were instrumental in securing a contest killing ban in Arizona in 2019. AWA's director of state affairs and Arizona state director led this fight, with a number of other groups participating meaningfully.

We are garnering additional wins on the state level. AWA staff were instrumental in securing a ban on bestiality in Kentucky in 2019. AWA's executive director worked closely with leadership in the legislature to secure this victory.



We are working to put an end to wildlife killing contests.

PUTTING ANIMALS INTO PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

We are putting animals into Presidential politics, AWA has developed a [national platform on animal protection](#) as a guiding document for the major presidential candidates who competed for party nominations for President. While several candidates issued detailed statements on animal welfare, our goal for the remainder of the election will be to have the two major party candidates issue detailed position statements on animal issues.



PROMOTING OTHER PATHBREAKING LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

We've helped build enormous support for the Big Cat Public Safety Act, which would shut the door on the trade in big cats as pets and stop roadside zoos from breeding lions and tigers to produce kittens for commercial petting opportunities. After a few months, the kittens become unmanageable and then the animals often get dumped into the exotic animal trade. We are partnering with Big Cat Rescue, a Florida-based sanctuary, on this legislation.

We've also been in the lead in pushing the Horseracing Integrity Act, which seeks to end rampant doping of horses in racing. Abuses in racing are turning our tracks into crash sites, with some of the best-known tracks in the country seeing dozens of horses die every season. When you factor in the thousands of poor-performing horses going from the tracks to slaughter plants, you'll see that horses are suffering in this industry in existential ways. We are partnering with The Jockey Club and other industry groups on this bill.

The Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, with 228 House cosponsors, would make it a crime to slaughter, or transport for slaughter, our iconic American equines for human consumption. This is a core priority for Animal Wellness Action.

The Bear Protection Act, which AWA brought back to life, prohibits the import or export of bear gallbladders and other internal organs for Traditional Chinese Medicine. It addresses two problems: 1) thousands of bears in Asia are cruelly confined in small cages while bile is extracted from their gallbladders for use in global trade, and 2) the poaching of American bears for their viscera, also for a global trade that is putting species at risk and causing inhumane treatment to supply this illicit market. Of the eight bear species in the world, many are in peril, and the presence of any legal trade puts them all at risk because bladders are indistinguishable by species. The enactment of this legislation will help ensure that the U.S. does not contribute to this inhumane practice.



**We are working to shut the
door on the trade of
big cats as pets...**

The Lead Endangers Animals Directly (LEAD) Act, again initiated by AWA, would phase out the use of lead ammunition on national wildlife refuges, putting an end to the needless incidental poisoning of millions of wild animals by spent lead that's left behind in fields, forests, and wetlands and also in the remains of animal carcasses. Lead alternatives are readily available, and comparably priced copper and steel ammunition outperform lead and do not keep killing days, weeks, and months after leaving the gun. In 1991, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banned the use of lead ammunition in waterfowl hunting, and waterfowl hunting has continued uninterrupted, reducing lead poisoning and protecting the species for a variety of wildlife uses, including hunting.

Animal Wellness Action has been conducting research on FDA's animal-testing requirements and preparing for 2020 introduction of a bill, tentatively titled the Modernizing the FDA Act. This bill will support advancement in science and better medicines by broadening current FDA regulations to allow more modern, non-animal methods for pharmaceutical drug testing. Currently, only 14% of drugs that have been successfully tested on animals succeed in clinical trials. FDA acknowledges that animal tests have been shown to be unreliable predictors of human response. This bill would direct FDA to update existing regulations within 21 C.F.R. to include the use of modern test methods that are predictive of human response. Moving to human-relevant test methods will mean better and less expensive drugs for humans and savings for pharmaceutical companies.

Animal Wellness Action is leading the effort to introduce the Kangaroo Protection Act to forbid imports of their skins into the U.S. for use in textiles and shoes. The bill is one component of a larger collaboration between AWA and the [Center for a Humane Economy](#) to get the major athletic shoe companies to stop using kangaroos in their shoes. Australian commercial hunters annually kill nearly two million kangaroos, including almost half a million joeys, to sell their parts all over the world. With the recent fires in Australia, which killed millions of kangaroos and hundreds of millions of other animals, it is time for a more precautionary approach to managing this species and to implement more robust protection efforts.



We are working with the shoe industry to stop using kangaroo leather.

The PETFAX Act. AWA's federal team worked on this new approach to attacking puppy mills and got the legislation introduced in the House. As we know, there are millions of healthy and adoptable dogs looking for homes, yet a national puppy mill industry continues to operate without sufficient federal controls, flooding our communities with dogs and mistreating the animals, particularly the breeding females who are kept in small cages they can barely turn around in for years as they are repeatedly bred. The PetFax Act provides pet purchasers a report detailing the conditions in which the animal was bred and raised and also upgrades standards of care for dogs (e.g., forbidding the stacking of cages and allowing the animals some occasional outdoor access and requiring some level of regular socialization and veterinary care).

The Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act would bring more transparency and accountability to USDA's runaway Commodity Checkoff Programs, prohibit anti-competitive practices that are putting our American family farmers out of business on a daily basis, and curb practices that have afforded Big Ag the opportunity to utilize small farmers' dollars to lobby against animal protection policies that promote more humane and sustainable agriculture.

**We created a new approach
to attacking puppy mills
and introduced legislation
to the house.**



INCOME IN 2019

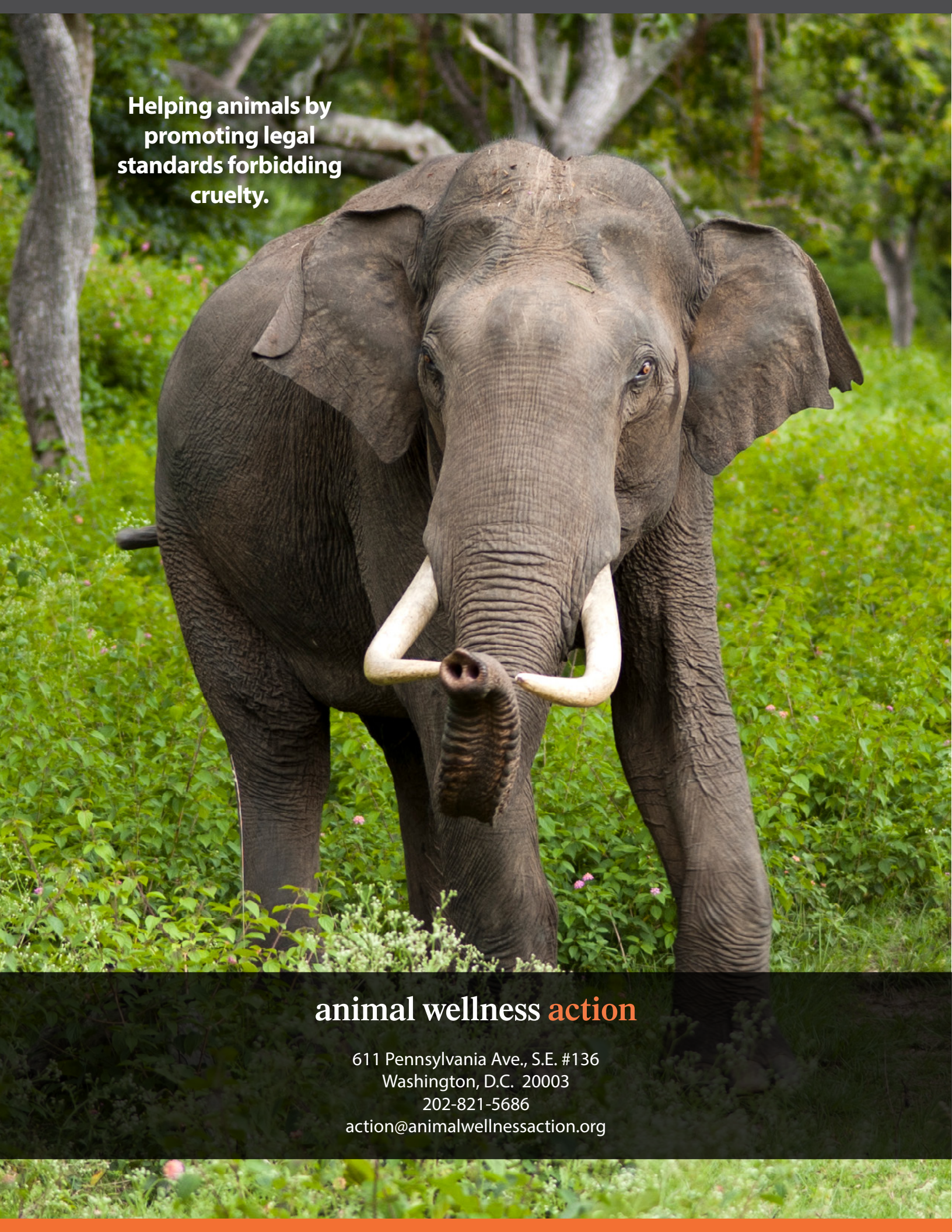
Income in 2019 on a cash basis was approximately \$442,000, which exceeded expenses of \$384,000 by \$58,000. A substantial number of “staff” took no pay or minimal pay, allowing the organization to spend nearly all of its money on programs. The organization spent approximately 90% of its resources on programs and only 10% on fundraising and administration. In addition, AWA PAC had income of \$100,850, and disbursements of \$64,300, with \$32,300 to Democrats and \$32,000 to the Republicans. Nearly 100% of dollars raised for our PAC go directly to candidates who support animal welfare, regardless of their party affiliation.

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2020

We expect a very big and important year ahead for us in 2020, with the 2nd Session of Congress and also national elections that we'll participate in. As we turn into the new year, with all of the challenges it brings, we thank each of you for your support, for your caring about animals, and for your willingness to fight for them. This work doesn't happen without you and without your understanding that public policy and elections matter to animals.

THANK YOU.





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