



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Senator Krueger Praises Schools for Moratorium on Hamburgers to Address Animal Cruelty Charges Says Use of Sick Animals for Food Highlights Need for “No-Downed Animal Legislation

LIZ KRUEGER February 10, 2008

State Senator Liz Krueger praised New York City schools officials for their quick response to reports that a major supplier of beef to the school system had been using beatings and other abusive practices on cows too sick to pass inspections. The action came after a Humane Society video showed sick cows being beaten, kicked, shocked with electricity and dragged with chains to force them to stand so they could pass inspection. “This kind of abuse is unacceptable on humane grounds, and also puts our food supply at risk,” said Senator Krueger. “Animals too sick to stand are more likely to be carriers of disease, and we need to ensure that our schoolchildren are not exposed to pathogens through consumption of meat from downed animals.”

Senator Krueger carries legislation to promote the humane treatment of farm animals. S. 3352, also known as the “Downed Animal” bill, prohibits the slaughter for human consumption of animals too sick to stand. A downed animal is a farm animal too sick to stand (often a direct result of inhumane farming practices). Downed animals are afflicted with a myriad of ailments besides mad cow disease. USDA records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act show that USDA explicitly approved the consumption of meat from downed animals afflicted with hepatitis, gangrene, pneumonia, malignant lymphoma, and

other ailments. Downed animals are also more likely to harbor bacterial contamination than walking animals.

This legislation was originally developed in 2003 in concert with leading animal rights groups, including Farm Sanctuary and the ASPCA.

“Creating a more humane and healthier New York is not an issue of partisanship,” stated Senator Krueger. “I am hoping that we can come together and commit to passing more humane legislation regulating the treatment and protection of our farm animals, companion animals, animals used in entertainment, exotics and wildlife. The Downed Animal bill is a perfect example of legislation that we should work together to pass. It is a common sense bill that both deals with the humane treatment of farm animals and the issue of public health. Animals too sick to stand, often a direct result of inhumane farming practices, are commonly slaughtered and sold for human consumption in the United States. Clearly, this is bad public policy.”

Similar legislation has also been introduced earlier at the federal level (S.394 in the U.S. Senate and H.R. 661 in the U.S. House of Representatives known as the “Downed Animal and Food Safety Protection Act”). Several states and cities have been successful in passing downed animal legislation, including California, Colorado, Illinois and Cincinnati. Not only is there growing awareness and concern among the public about these issues, but there is growing industry support for humane farming practices as well. McDonald’s, Burger King and Wendy’s, for example, have recognized the connection between healthier animals and the quality of food meant for human consumption. These companies have agreed not to purchase downed animal meat and have invested in finding healthier more humane ways of raising farm animals. According to a recent Zogby America poll of 1,000 adults, 4 out of 5 oppose the use of downed animals in the human food supply.

“I am pleased that the Department of Education has acted so quickly to address this potential health threat, and to establish that New York schools will not tolerate abusive practices toward farm animals,” said Senator Krueger.