



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

LaValle Bill Signed Into Law, New York Cracks Down on Dogfighting and Cockfighting

KENNETH P. LAVALLE August 4, 2011

New York State Senator Kenneth P. LaValle said today that legislation he introduced in the New York State Senate and passed both houses of the legislature has been signed into law by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The new law closes a major loophole in New York's animal fighting laws that currently allows some dogfighters and cockfighters to escape punishment by masquerading as spectators.

"Causing animals to fight and betting on the outcome is inhumane," said Senator LaValle. "This new law will provide law enforcement and prosecutors with a stronger tool with which to combat these terrible acts."

"Throughout New York, animals are forced to fight to the death and tear each other apart," said Patrick Kwan, New York state director for The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

"The HSUS commends Senator LaValle for championing this anti-cruelty bill and thanks Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver for their leadership in bringing us one major step closer to stopping this gruesome

bloodsport.”

While dogfighting and cockfighting are felonies in New York, attending an animal fight was only a violation. The new law upgrades the penalty for the spectators who fuel the economy of animal fighting with their admission fees and wagers to a more meaningful misdemeanor crime. It also stops dogfighters from escaping prosecution by blending into the crowd and pretending to be spectators when raided. Under the new law, knowingly attending animal fights will be punishable by up to three months in jail and a \$500 fine. A second offense will carry a penalty of up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.