



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Governor Cuomo Signs Ritchie 'Animal Fight' Bill

PATTY RITCHIE July 19, 2012

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Gives Law Enforcement New Tool to Catch, Punish Abusers

Governor Cuomo today signed into law a measure sponsored by Senator Patty Ritchie that helps to crack down on animal fighting in New York State.

The measure (S.6774), which is Senator Ritchie's 5th bill signed into law this year, prohibits people from owning, possessing, selling, transferring or manufacturing animal fighting paraphernalia.

"Animals forced into the barbaric practice of animal fighting are defenseless, and we need to do everything we can to protect them from this cruel and senseless activity," said Senator Ritchie, a lifelong dog owner.

"I'd like to thank Governor Cuomo for his help with closing this loophole and outlawing animal fighting paraphernalia. Through this law, we are cracking down on animal fighting and gaining added protection when it comes to keeping our pets safe."

Animal fighting is a felony in all 50 states, but it's often difficult to catch an animal fighting event as it happens. By outlawing the possession of fighting equipment, law enforcement officials and prosecutors will be given an extra tool when it comes to catching and punishing offenders.

Violators face up to 90 days in jail, fines up to \$500, or both. A second conviction within five years will carry a steeper, jail term of up to one year.

Animal advocacy groups, such as the ASPCA, will incorporate the new prohibition in the animal cruelty trainings it provides in New York's police academies, local law enforcement trainings around the country, as well as animal control officer and veterinarian training on the identification of fighting damage and animal cruelty.

The animal fighting bill was sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Jack McEneny.

The bill is Senator Ritchie's fifth so far to become law this year. Other "Chapters" sponsored by Senator Ritchie include the new Farm Brewery law approved this week by Governor Cuomo (S.7727), her bill to name the new I-781 Fort Drum Connector highway in honor of Army Gen. Paul Cerjan (S.7631-B), a bill sought by the state's Agriculture Commissioner and cosponsored with the head of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, Bill Magee, to simplify farm assessments (S.6778), and a measure to boost volunteer wilderness rescue teams (S.3552-A).