Hastings, Buchanan, and Merkley Introduce Bipartisan Concurrent Resolutions Urging an End to the Worldwide Dog and Cat Meat Trade

Fort Lauderdale, FL, November 5, 2019 | 0 comments
Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL) and Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL) introduced H.Con.Res.71, a bipartisan concurrent resolution calling on all nations to end their dog and cat meat trade and to enforce existing laws against the trade. Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced a companion resolution in the Senate. (Please find attached a copy of H.Con.Res.71):

"I am proud to have introduced this crucial bipartisan concurrent resolution with Congressman Buchanan along with Senator Merkley, which urges all countries to end their dog and cat meat trade," said Hastings. "While the passage of H.Res.401 in addition to the passage of the domestic ban on this barbaric trade last Congress were a huge step forward in giving the U.S. greater standing to advance the global animal protection movement, we still face many challenges in putting an end to this heinous practice once and for all. The thousands of animal welfare advocates and numerous organizations who work day in and day out to ensure the humane treatment of these innocent animals have my utmost admiration and gratitude. Together, I look forward to working with the endorsing organizations along with my colleagues to pass this resolution, not only to strengthen the U.S. commitment to the protection of animals, but also the rapidly growing global movement to end this brutal and heartbreaking trade."

"Dogs and cats provide love and companionship to millions of people and should not be slaughtered and sold as food," said Buchanan. "The United States sent a strong message last year by passing the bill that Rep. Hastings and I introduced to permanently ban the practice domestically. The U.S. should continue to be a leader against this inhumane and unsafe industry by passing this resolution condemning the practice across the globe."
“Millions of dogs and cats are subjected to inhumane conditions before being slaughtered in the most barbaric ways,” said Merkley. “These disturbing practices must end. This resolution sends an important message to the perpetrators of these abuses, that the United States is committed to enforcing essential animal welfare standards, and is urging the global community to do the same.”

SUMMARY:

H.Con.Res.71 does the following: (1) calls for an end to the consumption and trade of dog and cat meat on cruelty and public health grounds; (2) urges all nations with a dog or cat meat trade to adopt and enforce laws banning that trade; and (3) affirms the commitment of the United States to advancing the cause of animal protection and animal welfare, both domestically and around the world.

BACKGROUND:

In the 115th Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives took the lead on passing H.Res.401, a bipartisan resolution introduced by Hastings and Buchanan, which affirmed the commitment of the United States to the protection of animals around the world and urged all nations to take action to end the slaughter, consumption, and trade of dog and cat meat. Additionally, a bipartisan domestic prohibition on the dog and cat meat trade was included Section 12515 of the Farm Bill (Public Law 115–334), which was enacted on December 20, 2018. An estimated 30 million dogs and 10 million cats are slaughtered every year worldwide to sustain this brutal trade. Many dogs die during transport to the slaughterhouses after days or weeks without food or water, and others suffer illness and injury during transport, such as broken bones. No one can see this and walk away unaffected. Additionally, the capture, transport, and butchering of dogs and cats and the consumption of their meat poses public health risks such as outbreaks of trichinellosis, cholera, and rabies for traders, slaughterhouse workers, and consumers.

The legislation has been endorsed by: The Vanderpump Dog Foundation, the Humane Society Legislative Fund, Humane Society International, the Humane Society of the United States, the Animal Welfare Institute, The Buddy Fund, Hounds and Heroes, In Defense of Animals, Willie’s Kids, the Lychee Project, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Animal Wellness Action, and the Animal Wellness Foundation.

“The dog meat trade and its affiliated atrocities are a horrific expression of the evils man can commit. We need to continue to draw attention to what is happening in Yulin and elsewhere - educating, encouraging and inspiring communities around the world to fight these barbaric practices. It’s an honor to work with Congressmen Alcee Hastings and Vern Buchanan, and the other dedicated officials fighting this fight; they are champions for the voiceless, and
their commitment to implementing these bipartisan resolutions will hopefully save countless innocent animal lives. We are proud to be a part of it," said Lisa Vanderpump and Dr. John Sessa of the Vanderpump Dog Foundation.

"Around 30 million dogs and 10 million cats are subjected to this brutal industry globally every year, with animals often snatched off the street or stolen from loving families, still wearing collars as they are subjected to unspeakable abuse to end up on someone’s dinner plate," said Sara Amundson, President of the Humane Society Legislative Fund. "We are so grateful to Representatives Hastings and Buchanan and Senator Merkley for leading the bipartisan fight in Congress to end this horrific cruelty worldwide."

"This issue transcends culture and borders. It’s about compassion and shared human destiny," said Brenda Bush of The Buddy Fund.

"For years with Hounds and Heroes, I have spoken against and fought to end the cruel dog and cat meat industry here and abroad," said Bonnie-Jill Laflin, founder of Hounds and Heroes. "On behalf of my dog, Jaclyn Chan, who was rescued from the dog meat trade in China, and myself we commend Rep. Hastings, Rep. Buchanan and Sen. Merkley for their never-ending fight to halt this horrific industry around the world."

"The miserable lives and horrific deaths of these dogs and cats is an affront to our shared, global humanity. We support this resolution as an important step toward protecting millions of sentient beings from gruesome torture inflicted in the name of ‘tender’ meat," said Matthew Hamity, Director of Campaigns and Legislative Affairs for In Defense of Animals.

"On behalf of Willie’s Kids and the entire Nelson family, we commend Rep. Hastings, Rep. Buchanan and Sen. Merkley for introducing this Resolution calling on all countries to end the dog and cat meat industry around the world," said Amy and Raelyn Nelson, Co-Founders of Willie’s Kids, a national humane education non-profit. "We strongly support an end to the brutal killing and eating of thousands of dogs and cats a year."

"The Lychee Dog Meat Festival is a horrendous, torturous event held in Yulin, China. It begins every year on June 21st during summer solstice and lasts for 10 awful days where 10,000–15,000 dogs (and cats) are brutally tortured and then eaten. We are hopeful that the President Trump will make this part of his negotiations with China. Passing this legislation will help to eliminate this egregious activity once and for all," said John Lekas, organizer of the Lychee Project.
"Like all animals, dogs and cats are individuals who feel pain and fear, and they aren't ours to hack apart and use for food," said Ingrid Newkirk, President of PETA. "PETA supports Rep. Hastings' effort to save these animals from being killed, cooked, dismembered, and eaten—and urges people around the world to extend that same compassion to all animals."

"The dog meat trade – claiming 30 million lives a year – is the largest form of dog exploitation on the planet," said Marty Irby, Executive Director of Animal Wellness Action. "These creatures are our dutiful companions and not our dinner fare. We applaud Reps. Hastings and Buchanan for their tireless work to bring this gruesome trade to an end."

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings serves as Vice-Chairman of the House Rules Committee, Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and Co-Chairman of the Florida Delegation.

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H. CON. RES. 71

Urging all nations to outlaw the dog and cat meat trade and to enforce existing laws against such trade.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 31, 2019

Mr. Hastings (for himself and Mr. Buchanan) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Urging all nations to outlaw the dog and cat meat trade and to enforce existing laws against such trade.

Whereas a bipartisan domestic prohibition on the knowing slaughter, transportation, possession, purchase, or sale of a dog or cat for human consumption was included in section 12515 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–334), which was enacted on December 20, 2018;

Whereas the dog and cat meat trade occurs throughout the world, primarily in Asia;

Whereas established dog meat markets still exist today;
Whereas Humane Society International, Animals Asia Foundation, and others estimate that 30,000,000 dogs and 10,000,000 cats die annually worldwide as a result of the dog and cat meat trade, and those organizations have found that a considerable number of the dogs and cats in this trade are stolen pets still wearing collars when they reach the slaughterhouses, in addition to stray dogs and cats who are captured for slaughter;

Whereas there have been reports of abuse, poor living conditions, and cruel slaughtering techniques for dogs and cats farmed for their meat;

Whereas many dogs and cats die during transport to slaughterhouses after days or weeks crammed into small cages on the back of vehicles without food or water, and others suffer illness and injury during transport;

Whereas the extreme suffering of dogs and cats at such slaughterhouses and on transportation trucks would breach anti-cruelty laws in the United States and other countries;

Whereas many government officials, civil society advocates, and activists are working to end the dog and cat meat trade on anticerulty and public health grounds, and the Governments of Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, and Hong Kong have passed laws banning the dog meat trade;

Whereas the World Health Organization has linked the dog meat industry to human outbreaks of trichinellosis, cholera, and rabies.

Whereas those involved in the dog meat industry are at an increased health risk for zoonotic diseases, such as rabies,
which can transfer from dogs to humans through infectious material such as saliva;

Whereas the spread of disease may be exacerbated by unsanitary conditions of slaughter and by the sale of dog and cat meat at open-air markets and restaurants; and

Whereas the World Health Organization and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control have both acknowledged the link between the spread of rabies and the dog meat trade which sees large numbers of dogs of unknown disease status moved vast distances: Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) calls for an end to the consumption and trade of dog and cat meat on cruelty and public health grounds;

(2) urges all nations with a dog or cat meat trade to adopt and enforce laws banning that trade; and

(3) affirms the commitment of the United States to advancing the cause of animal protection and animal welfare, both domestically and around the world.

HCON 71 III