



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 28, 2024

To: The House Environment and Transportation Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Agriculture - Roosters – Restrictions – HB 1030 - Support

Chair Korman, Vice - Chair Boyce, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across the State of Maryland, I respectfully ask that the House Environment & Transportation Committee vote favorably for Agriculture - Roosters – Restrictions – HB 1030.

This bill would prohibit, unless authorized by the Department of Agriculture, a person from keeping a certain number of roosters on certain property beginning on January 1, 2026, subject to certain exceptions; authorizing the Department to work in cooperation with a local animal control or law enforcement officer to enforce the Act; and establishing a fine of \$1,000 for a violation of the Act.

Maryland has taken a strong stance against cockfighting, which involves roosters. Unless the roosters are being used for agricultural purposes, there are concerns that a large number of roosters being kept could be used for not only for cockfighting, which is illegal in Maryland, but also that they could present a potential health hazard in the form of Avian Flu.

HB 1030 would ensure that the cockfighting industry could not find a home in Maryland and protect the health and well-being of Marylanders.

In closing, I would like to thank Delegate Allen for his sponsorship of HB 1030 and ask the committee for a favorable report.