

February 14, 2024

IN FAVOR of HB 357

Chair Marc Korman, Vice Chair Regina T. Boyce and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michele Waldman and I am the Founder and President of Rosie's Farm Sanctuary, an animal sanctuary in Potomac. We provide tours for hundreds of people in our community each year. We also have over 30,000 subscribers/followers and reach upwards of million accounts each month.

We have many types of rescued Farmed animals including egg laying hens. I love our hens. They are so completely misunderstood by humans. My girls are all so social, playful, curious, affectionate and smart. They recognize 100 faces and have a very developed language. They have best friends and come together to talk. They sound like bunch of ladies in a hair salon and I swear they gossip about me when I leave their coop. They are such happy girls.

Confining birds like this to a battery cage is simply unnecessarily cruel. Their welfare depends on three things; physical well-being, mental well-being and the ability to follow their natural instincts. All three of these are grossly compromised in battery cages. I honestly cannot imagine my hens being confined to a cage with five other hens when their entire existence is on the size of a piece of printer paper, not even being able to turn around or spread their wings. It goes against all of their natural instincts and is cruel for no necessary reason.

My hens spend their days running, jumping, perching, and stretching their wings. They love to roll in the dirt, which is called dust bathing, and is really important for them to rid themselves of parasites.

Hens naturally spend 60% of their days foraging - looking for seed and insects in the ground. They do this whether or not they are provided food. It is a well-honed instinct that has developed for millions of years (let's remember they are descendants of dinosaurs). Over a very short period of time, humans have caged these birds without any care or compassion about what it does to the birds physical or mental well-being. It goes against everything that they are born to do.

Honestly this bill is the BARE MINIMUM of what we should do for these hens.

Thank you,  
Michele Waldman