

2/12/2025

On behalf of the Animal Control Officers of the State of Maryland I am asking for a favorable outcome for this bill.

Our occupation has seen an increase in complaints for citizens housing large numbers of roosters on their properties. These animals are housed individually in small cages or tethered within feet of one another to rise their aggression. They have their combs and waddles cut off to prevent excessive bleeding in the “pit” and this itself is inhumane. This is only a precursor to when they are actually fought which is usually to the death with sharp blades attached to their spurs which slices the animals open.

My experience over the last 25 years has brought me onto the scene of gamefowl yards that would house anywhere from 20-600 birds. The impact on the surrounding communities with the constant crowing, the criminal activity that goes hand in hand with cockfighting, and the exposure of possible avians illnesses is not acceptable.

For Law Enforcement, partnering veterinarians, and Animal Control Officers, these properties are a nightmare. These animals are bred to be extremely aggressive and will display that aggression to those who are attempting to handle them. My experience has shown that the roosters seized from these properties are doomed for euthanasia as they do not make safe pets and/ or are a threat with avian illnesses.

Please have a favorable outcome on this bill.