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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To establish an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section within the Department of Justice’s Environment and Natural Resources Division, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NEGUSE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section within the Department of Justice’s Environment and Natural Resources Division, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Animal Cruelty En-
5 forcement Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) There is a significant connection between
2 animal cruelty and violence against humans, domes-
3 tic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, homicide,
4 gang activity, drug trafficking, and other crimes.

5 (2) Animal fighting activity may increase the
6 spread of diseases transmitted between animals and
7 people.

8 (3) A number of Federal laws have been en-
9 acted to address cruelty to animals.

10 (4) Recognizing the connection between animal
11 cruelty and serious crimes the Federal Bureau of In-
12 vestigation tracks animal cruelty crimes.

13 (5) There is bipartisan and widespread public
14 support for addressing animal cruelty.

15 (6) There is a government interest in ensuring
16 laws are robustly enforced for the betterment and
17 protection of society.

18 (7) The lack of a dedicated animal crimes en-
19 forcement unit within the Department of Justice has
20 resulted in unacceptable delays in prosecutions, and
21 an overall lack of prosecution, of animal crimes.

22 (8) Dedicated staff and resources at the De-
23 partment of Justice will facilitate successful enforce-
24 ment of animal cruelty laws, which often have
25 unique investigative elements, by providing special-

1 ized knowledge and focus, and streamlining the han-
2 dling of these offenses.

3 **SEC. 3. ANIMAL CRUELTY CRIMES SECTION OF THE DE-**
4 **PARTMENT OF JUSTICE.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an Ani-
6 mal Cruelty Crimes Section within the Department of Jus-
7 tice’s Environment and Natural Resources Division to en-
8 force Federal laws prohibiting animal cruelty under the
9 jurisdiction of the Department of Justice.

10 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Animal Cruelty
11 Crimes Section is to enforce Federal laws prohibiting ani-
12 mal cruelty under the jurisdiction of the Department of
13 Justice and to vigorously pursue investigations and pros-
14 ecutions under such laws.

15 (c) COORDINATION.—The Animal Cruelty Crimes
16 Section shall coordinate with the Department of Agri-
17 culture, the Office of Inspector General of the Department
18 of Agriculture, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the
19 United States Marshals Service, U.S. Customs and Border
20 Protection, and other agencies, as appropriate.

21 (d) REPORT.—On the date that is one year after the
22 date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
23 the Animal Cruelty Crimes Section shall submit to Con-
24 gress a report on, for the previous year—

1 (1) the number of charges that were filed for
2 violations of laws described in subsection (b),
3 disaggregated by the law alleged to have been vio-
4 lated, the State in which the violation was alleged to
5 have occurred, and the number of convictions; and

6 (2) the number of investigations of violations of
7 laws described in subsection (b) for which charges
8 were not filed.