



What You Need to Know: Animal Extremist Groups

Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN)

What You Need to Know Animal Extremist Groups Texas Humane Legislation Network



Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

Texas Humane Legislation Network Part One - Who They Are, and Who Their Friends Are

The Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) has been a part of Texas for over 40 years. In this three-part series, Protect The Harvest will expose this animal extremist group which attempts to pass overreaching legislation locally as well as its connections to national animal extremist groups. THLN is affiliated with groups like the Humane Society for the United States (HSUS), Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) and Animal Wellness Action (AWA).

Who IS Texas Humane Legislation Network?

The THLN according to their website, is a 501(c)4 and, "the only Texas-based organization focused on addressing unjust animal welfare laws." The website states they are working to stop animal cruelty before it starts. This sounds like a good thing on the surface, but a closer look tells a much different story. According to the group Capital Research Center's InfluenceWatch website: "Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) is an animal liberation advocacy group which focuses on legislation involving animal rights in the state of Texas. THLN lobbies and participates in partisan activities, allowing the group to influence legislation in support of its animal rights agenda."

Upon closer investigation, there are some familiar players within the organization, as well as others THLN plays with in the proverbial sandbox. In addition, there are some similarities between THLN and other animal extremist groups we at Protect The Harvest have written about.



Previously Known as Texas Humane Information Network (THIN)

THLN was founded in 1975, originally as Texas Humane Information Network (THIN) when “a handful of concerned advocates from across the state recognized the humane treatment of animals needed to be the law.” Until 1994, the group THIN was more moderate and leaned towards animal welfare, but they had little success with the legislature. This lack of success opened the door to evict then President, Martha Cox, and bring in a more radical group of board members. In a “donation needed” letter from the new, President Louis D. Marks, Jr., he stated:

“As reported in our September newsletter, no animal protection laws were passed by the 73rd Texas Legislature despite the efforts of our lobbyist, THIN board members and volunteer networkers.

In preparation for the 74th Texas Legislative session which convenes in January 1995, the THIN Board of Directors has decided to re-think the organization’s activities and develop new strategy to ensure future successes. Since last October, with the assistance of an experienced business counselor, the concept for a new master plan began to evolve. During 1994, the board’s efforts will focus on goal setting, planning, defining action steps and determining tactics. In other words, our charter is to develop and implement a strategic plan which fulfills and strengthens THIN’s mission – passage of humane animal protection legislation in the State of Texas.”

According to Texas Humane Legislation Network’s website, “Since its inception, THLN has evolved to form partnerships with local animal shelters, animal service agencies, law enforcement and animal advocacy groups.” They are also involved in grassroots lobbying as well as hiring prestigious professional lobbyists to facilitate the passage of dozens of animal protection measures. THLN considers itself to be the, “...only organization in Texas who works year-round to protect animals through legislation.”



THLN's Bed Partners

It should not be surprising to learn that THLN has current and former staff members who have hopped from one animal extremist group to another. It is also not a surprise that THLN has partnered with other animal extremist groups including American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC), Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and Animal Wellness Action (AWA).

You may recall that the disgraced former Executive Director of HSUS, Wayne Pacelle, has attempted to reinvent of himself by starting the Animal Wellness Action organization. In fact, up until the sexual harassment claims were made against Wayne Pacelle, the HSUS logo was featured on THLN's "Partners" page. Since that time, HSUS's logo is no longer there, but instead, the logo of Animal Welfare Action has replaced it. AWA is using front man Marty Irby (former HSUS) as a puppet to be manipulated by none other than Wayne Pacelle.

Board of Directors

According to their website, the Board of Directors at THLN, "...is comprised of individuals who bring their professional talents and animal welfare expertise to the organization to help further its mission for the animals. All work is provided on a voluntary basis. The duties of the Board of Directors include establishing and implementing legislative agendas designed to pass effective animal protection legislation; providing information to the news media concerning THLN issues; informing THLN's membership of animal-related legislation; increasing membership statewide; working with other organizations who share THLN's goals; and fund raising to provide the financial resources needed for lobbying, membership communications and media-related activities."

- President Stephen Hurst has spent his professional career in real estate development and finance. He has no background in animal husbandry, except for fostering dogs for a rescue group.
- Vice President and Legislative Chair Jaime Olin is currently Senior Counsel with the law firm Skiermont Derby, practicing patent and commercial litigation. Her prior work history was as Legal Advocacy Counsel with ASPCA focusing on "animal welfare" litigation, animal cruelty prosecution support and "equine welfare" issues.



- Treasurer Stephen Phillips is a "...self-proclaimed activist for the causes of those who cannot speak for themselves." His background is with founding, funding and operating non-profits and he has experience with the state law and rule making machinery to "further THLN's objectives." He was raised on a farm and showed livestock and is a board-certified tax attorney.
- Secretary Mona Thaxton has a professional history of more than 35 years in nonprofit healthcare, education, and volunteer civic leadership. She served for 9 years as a board member of San Antonio's Animal Care Services Department. She is currently retired on her family ranch near San Antonio and has become more involved with the "interests of cattle, sheep and goat ranchers, and protection of wildlife."
- Sharon Hotchkiss is a lawyer and works as a solo practitioner. She has been practicing law for over 25 years. Her primary areas of practice are in business transactions and intellectual property (copyright and trademark). Her clients are primarily start-ups and non-profits, including "animal welfare" and rescue groups.
- Susan Beldon served on the board of the San Antonio Humane Society for 6 years and currently sits on the City of San Antonio Animal Care Services Advisory Board. She is interested in animal-related legislation and laws.
- Eric Holliday's path to THLN began about 6 years ago when a family in the neighborhood moved and abandoned their dog. He began working as a volunteer with a German Shepherd rescue group. He was raised on a farm in Louisiana.
- Jennifer Rogers grew up with family pets. She has a degree in journalism and psychology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. She has owned businesses in the pet care industry for 15 years, she has a marketing/creative firm that focuses on small business needs, and has worked with various animal rescues.
- Elisabeth Rutledge combines a passion for animal extremism (rights) with experience in public affairs and advocacy communication to help THLN further its mission.
- Reading this list of the Board of Directors shows one very stark fact- not one person is a licensed veterinarian, nor does anyone have a degree in animal husbandry. In fact, the Board of Directors list is long on attorneys and non-existent on animal welfare professionals.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

Advisory Board

As with the Board of Directors, the Advisory Board reeks of animal extremism.

- Cile Holloway served as THLN's Board President for more than 40 years.
- Julie Caramante investigates cruelty against horses, and led a campaign to close the Dallas Crown processing plant.
- Lisa Gilchrist is the President of the Board of Homeless and Orphaned Pets Endeavor (HOPE).
- Sherry Ferguson is the Executive Director of the Houston Humane Society. The Houston Press reported on allegations of mismanagement and misconduct at Houston Humane Society in 2017. It alleged that Ferguson was "rarely on site, sometimes disappearing for months at a time."
- Jack Knox sits on the Advisory Committee to the City of Dallas Animal Shelter Commission and on the board of the Independent Petroleum Association of America.
- Glynda Ray serves on the board of the Animal Services Center Advisory Board (ASCAB).
- Erin Shults, DVM, is founder and CEO of Mazie's Mission, a non-profit animal rescue hospital.
- Robert "Skip" Trimble formerly served on the board of the Animal Legal Defense Fund, a litigation groups seeking to secure legal "personhood" for animals. He was the chair of the Dallas Animal Shelter Commission and helped to establish an Animal Cruelty Prosecutor for the District Attorney's Office in Dallas County. It is also important to note that Trimble has given the following funds: current State Representative Eddie Lucio III \$1,500 in campaign donations, Humane Society Legislative Fund \$5,000 per year since 2011, and Animal Wellness Action \$5,000 per year since 2018. Trimble is also listed on Texas Humane Network (the 501(c)3 counterpart to THLN) website, along with his wife, Mary (another animal extremist), as "Corporate Premiere Partners.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

THLN's Cooperation with Other Extremist Groups

THLN does not even try to cloak their animal extremist origins. Their 2016 Annual Advocacy Conference list of speakers reads like a Who's Who of animal extremism. This list is only a partial list, the full list can be found [HERE](#)

- Joyce Tischler "affectionately known as 'the Mother of Animal Law'", is the co-founder of the Animal Legal Defense Fund and was ALDF's Executive Director for twenty-five years. As of 2016, she was ALDF general counsel, responsible for in-house legal matters.
- Lara Tomlin, Esq., Assistant District Attorney Denton County, is the Secretary of the Animal Law Section of the State Bar of Texas. She handles animal-related cases.
- Nancy Perry, ASPCA Sr. Vice President of Government Relations, and is responsible for the overall strategic and tactical direction of the ASPCA's legislative efforts and public policy at the local, state and government levels. She also worked at the Humane Society of the United States for 16 years, where she served as Vice President of Government Affairs.
- Kevin O'Neill, Vice President of State Affairs of ASPCA Government Relations, works closely with lawmakers and their staff and other animal advocates to pass legislation and regulations that improve and strengthen animal welfare laws. Prior to joining ASPCA in 2012, he worked in the California Legislature for 15 years and worked on California's Proposition 2 (Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act requiring poultry farmers in the state).
- John J. Pippin, M.D. F.A.C.C., is the Director of Academic Affairs at the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), a PETA affiliate. PCRM has worked to replace the use of animals in medical and drug research, medical education and the training of physician's, veterinarians and other medical professionals.
- David Balmer, Political Director at the Humane Society Legislative Fund, and former member of Colorado State Senate, resigned to become the political director of state campaigns for the Humane Society Legislative Fund.
- Katie Jarl, Texas State Director of the HSUS, works to pass animal extremist legislation at the state and local levels. She previously served as Deputy Director of the HSUS Media Relations department.
- Audrey Perdue, Grassroots Manager with the ASPCA, manages their legislative advocacy efforts, three volunteer programs and trains "advocates" to use their voices to help animals. Formerly she was a legislative coordinator for Federal Affairs team of HSUS.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

- Kelsey Eberly, Staff Attorney with ALDF, assists ALDF with cases and projects. She was the chair of UCLA Animal Law Society, the school's student Animal Legal Defense Fund chapter. She earned a graduate certificate in animal Policy and Advocacy from Humane Society University in 2006 and served as a legal intern with Compassion Over Killing.
- Jeff Pierce, Legislative Counsel for Animal Legal Defense Fund, has developed and brought lawsuits under various causes of action including the Endangered Species Act. He earned his J.D. from Stanford Law School and conducted legal research for Compassion Over Killing.

Know What's Lurking

After reading through the "cast" of Texas Humane Legislation Network and their "friends and family" it is very apparent that this is a group who has spent the past 40+ years developing their animal extremist strategies. They have formed corporate partnerships, developed an extensive donor list, (their IRS form 990 from 2018 shows a single contribution of \$1.5 million dollars and that they had over \$2.1 million in publicly traded securities). THLN has successfully crafted legislation that is overreaching in one of the top states in the country for tough animal cruelty laws.

This is Part 1 of a 3 Part Series

In Part 2, we discuss how THLN is influencing the children of Texas against animal agriculture and animal ownership.



TEXAS HUMANE LEGISLATION NETWORK- PART 2- INFLUENCING YOUTH



Texas – Did You Know There’s A Group Influencing Your Youth Against Animal Agriculture and Animal Ownership? Part 2 of 3

Propagandizing Our Youth

Like many other animal extremist groups, Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) is not satisfied with only pushing their agenda on the legislators and subsequently the people of Texas. Their activities amount to over-regulation in a state that already has tough animal cruelty statutes on the books. THLN believes it is also their mission to propagandize the youth. They have two main programs for that purpose – the Junior Advocacy Program and the Humane Library Program.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

Junior Advocate Program

According to THLN's website, the Junior Advocate Program's mission statement reads as follows: "The THLN Junior Advocate Program is a youth empowerment and education program that engages young 'animal welfare advocates', giving them the resources necessary to take their passion and love for animals and affect change in ways possible for them."

The program is geared towards children 9-17 years of age and gives them, "...the opportunity to take their passion for animals and affect change in a variety of ways." THLN Junior Advocates will receive advocacy training and gain a "well-rounded knowledge of animal welfare issues in the state of Texas, meet their legislators and help raise awareness about animal welfare legislation."

A student must apply to the program and once accepted, the student participates in a 30-minute orientation with THLN. They then must complete the following tasks:

1. Set up a meeting with a Texas state representative or state senator to discuss a particular animal welfare issue. The student is required to set up the meeting and conduct it. Topics can include THLN bills and/or any animal welfare issues in their community.
2. Write a letter to a federal senator or congressman on a Texas based animal welfare issue that may be fixed by federal legislation. The letter must be well researched and demonstrate strong advocacy skills.
3. Attend one THLN event in their community and address the audience with a 3–5-minute presentation on why animal welfare issues are important to the student. If there are no THLN events in the area, the presentation may be recorded.
4. Volunteer at least fifteen hours of volunteer service to a local animal welfare organization (government shelter, non-profit shelter)

The student will write a three-page paper at the end of the program to describe what they have learned. The student has fifteen months to complete the requirements.

On the surface the program sounds as if it could be educational, especially learning about how government works and how a student can effect change. However, the fact that the program is under the auspices of THLN is concerning in a number of ways, not the least of which is the organization's ideology. Parents and teachers need to know that THLN is an animal extremist organization and it is propagandizing children with their viewpoint, instead of allowing the parent to teach their child about animal care and husbandry.



The Humane Library Program

The stated goal of THLN's Humane Library Project is to source "...the best literature for children and young adults on animal welfare and then donate these books to Texas school districts that have high instances of abuse and neglect to help them learn about animals and to develop empathy. An important lesson in empathy is that animals are living beings and should be treated with respect and compassion."

Again, on the surface the program sounds like a good idea, but since THLN is responsible for sourcing the "best literature," parents should be very concerned.

The complete list of books can be found [HERE](#)

It is not the responsibility of an animal extremist group to tell a parent what books their child should read and these books range from picture books, to chapter books, to nonfiction for teenagers.

Stories Can Be Used to Influence and Manipulate

Some of the titles are classics that tell the story using anthropomorphism like Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty*, which dealt with animal cruelty and E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*. However, others are pushing an agenda that many adults should be aware of because the ideology of animal extremism is to remove animals from human contact.

For example, picture books are suitable for preschoolers and very early readers and yet there are titles that promote veganism (*V is for Vegan: the ABC's of being Kind*), alternative holiday practices (*A Turkey for Thanksgiving*; *Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving*), and anti-tethering (*Buddy Unchained*).

Chapter books can range from young readers through high school, and the list of these books also should make parents rethink this program. One book listed for grades 2-5 about "The plight of farmed animals" is *Audrey (Cow): An Oral Account of a Most Daring Escape*, Based More or Less on a True Story. *Paint the Wind* is about wild mustang protection and *Tua and the Elephant* is about elephants in human care.

The nonfiction section really begins pushing the vegan agenda with *That's Why We Don't Eat Animals*, *Vegan is Love: Having a Heart and Taking Action*, and *Allowed to Grow Old: Portraits of Elderly Animals from Farm Sanctuaries*. *No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs* is aimed at 8-12 year-olds and discusses dogs in research and entertainment.



Animal Extremist Ideology Does Not Belong In Schools

These overreaching actions by an animal extremist group to target children is appalling and unconscionable. Projecting one's personal agenda, or for that matter, corporate ideology, on our youth can open the door to many issues. Pushing a vegan agenda is unhealthy for children both nutritionally and emotionally. Ideological anthropomorphic vegan books tell ranching and farming children that because their family raises cattle for food they must not be "kind." Anthropomorphism creates a skewed view of the place animals should have in society (personhood for animals). The animal extremist ideology anthropomorphizes animals to the extreme and promotes giving animals more rights than a young child.

Animal Extremist Ideologues Believe They Know Best

THLN obviously feels that they know what's best, not only for the children of Texas, but also in the legislation they promote. After all, they spend a LOT of money, every year, donating to their "Endorsed Candidates." Some of these same candidates have shown up on Humane Society Legislative Fund's list of "Humane Legislators." These legislators are usually from urban areas and not from farming or ranching communities, yet they purport to know more than those who have studied animal husbandry, veterinary medicine or even soil science.

If you would like to learn about the origins of Texas Humane Legislative Network, read Part 1 on our website [HERE](#).

In Part 3 we will discuss the legislation that THLN is pushing during this 87th Legislative Session To read Part 3 click [HERE](#)



TEXAS HUMANE LEGISLATION NETWORK- PART 3- OVERREACHING LEGISLATION



Texas – Did You Know There’s A Busy Animal Extremist Group Pushing Laws in Your State?

Texas Humane Legislation Network - Part 3 of 3

When people think of Texas, they often think of American traditions, cattle ranching, and people that stand for what they believe in. Unbeknownst to many Texans, their way of life and traditions are being threatened at the core. A powerful and active animal extremist group is in their midst and it is doing its best to instill an extremist vegan agenda that will ultimately ban animal use and animal ownership. This group is the Texas Humane Legislative Network (THLN). THLN introduces animal extremist bills every legislative session, often introducing the same bill year after year, until they are passed. Their ability to do this points to a budget that appears never-ending. In Part Three, we introduce you to THLN’s Endorsed Candidates as well as some of the legislation they have been pushing down the throats of Texans.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

THLN's Endorsed Candidates

THLN has developed a list of "Endorsed Candidates"; those that they have donated to, as well as believe will further THLN's agenda. THLN has given these lawmakers a catchy and fully misleading name, "Animal Approved" candidates. THLN does not play partisan politics. They choose their candidates based on the candidate demonstrating he or she has a "dedication to advancing animal welfare legislation." THLN further states that while they understand voters consider a range of issues and factors when voting, they are there to, "simply to highlight the legislators who have a history of supporting animal welfare legislation."

Since 2018, over \$60,000 has been given to Texas candidates from HSUS, THLN, and a few individuals. A couple of those individuals are Robert "Skip" Trimble and T. Boone Pickens, both of who follow animal extremism ideology.

Legislators and their Legislation

THLN donates not only to their Animal Approved legislators, but also to others not on the list. It was not hard to find that some legislator's names seem to crop up repeatedly legislative session after session and there are certain bills that seem to also crop up every two years. This legislation is not aimed at true animal welfare, it is aimed at furthering an animal extremist ideology.

THLN favored politicians have put forward no less than four "restraint of dogs" bills for this session alone. There are three bills relating to a sales and use tax exemption for animals adopted from or sold by a shelter or rescue.

THLN's special Animal Approved legislators like to add more and more regulations that are redundant and not needed in a state that already has very strict animal cruelty laws. Texas is ranked #11 out of 50 states according to a ranking done in 2020 by, of all groups, Animal Legal Defense Fund. To view click [HERE](#)



THLN's Website Boasts About Legislation They Push

THLN is very proud of the legislation they push and nowhere is it more apparent than on their website. Under the tab of "Legislation" are subtabs like Find your Legislator, Texas Legislation 101, 2021 Legislative Session, 2021 Legislative priorities, Victories, Voting Records, and Tethering Toolkit - where they teach you to "Learn How to Pass a Tethering Ordinance in your community." Under that is a catchy phrase "Legislate to Change Their Fate."

HB 1451- The Dog and Cat Breeder Bill

In 2011 HB 1451 was passed and was related to the licensing and regulation of certain dog and cat breeders. This bill affected all large commercial breeders currently licensed by the USDA. The law considered any owner with 11 or more intact females, or who sold more than 20 dogs in a year, to be an inhumane and illegal breeding facility. Not surprisingly, breeders who worked hard to improve their animal's genetics, or produced purpose-bred dogs for sale were horrified. They were already abiding by the Animal Welfare Act and USDA guidelines, and now, a bill sponsored by a representative who has a strong animal extremist viewpoint was hindering them further.

Three breeders and the Responsible Pet Owners Alliance (RPOA), which represented 305 American Kennel Club groups in Texas, filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking that the bill be struck down as unconstitutional. However, an amicus curiae was filed by THLN with support from HSUS urging the court to uphold the bill. In January 2013, the bill was upheld by a federal district judge.

HB 1451 - Egregious Overreach and Violation of Civil Rights

Why did Texas breeders and responsible pet owners fight so hard against this bill? According to a blog published here, HB 1451 "establishes a new state bureaucracy to regulate home dog and cat breeders mandating inspections of private property, large fees and enormous fines. The new law allows the right of entry into citizen's homes without a warrant and without the owner's presence." Further, the blog stated that the new law "establishes a 'bounty fund' to activists for reporting dog and cat breeders to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). The bill regulates law abiding Texas citizens and hampers economic and business growth in order to promote the private agenda of heavily financed special interest groups. The HSUS/ASPCA/PETA backed bill violates personal property rights, contradicting key values that (then) Governor Perry professes to uphold..."

The Licensed Breeder Program was initially proposed to regulate 1000 kennels, however



that number was reduced to 600 when Rep. David Simpson questioned the number. The USDA and AKC numbers of breeders in the state did not even reach the 600-kennel estimate. Ironically, the regulating of the kennels depended on the 600-kennel number so that it would be a “revenue neutral” bill. Instead, it has been a cost to taxpayers and was never held accountable.

Veterinarian Resigns Over HB 1451 in Protest

A member of the Licensed Breeder Advisory Committee, Past President of Texas Veterinary Medical Association Dr. Lori Teller, resigned her position with this statement: “I am resigning my position on the Advisory Committee. Unfortunately, I do not feel that we are going down the right road to improve animal welfare by stopping puppy mill breeders while encouraging the good breeders to continue. I think we are driving the good breeders out of business and sending the bad breeders underground, where they will continue to crank out unhealthy animals and continue the cycle of neglect and abuse. The breeders who do seriously care about the animals they raise and improving the breeds they are passionate about will either be out of business, or at the least, out of state. Certainly, we are not making life better for either the citizens or the animals of Texas.”

This is a powerful statement when one realizes that this is a true animal welfare advocate – one who has spent years studying veterinary medicine and treating her patients, rather than someone who has no background in animal welfare or animal husbandry.



Sunset Advisory Commission

In 2020, the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, an agency of the Texas legislature that evaluates state agencies and makes recommendations to the legislature on the need for, performance of, and improvement to agencies under review, studied the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, and the Licensed Breeder program. This is done every 12 years, so it was the first time the Licensed Breeder Program was looked at. On June 11, 2020, the AKC Legislative Alerts page stated that the Sunset Commission recommended that the Licensed Breeder Act be eliminated, and to expect opposition. To view click [HERE](#)

A paragraph from the article states: "The Sunset Advisory Commission's June 2020 Staff Report has recommended that the Licensed Breeders Program, along with fourteen other TDLR occupational licensing programs, is not necessary to protect the public. In its findings, it implies that the law as enacted is fundamentally flawed, as it provides significant statutory exemptions and unenforceable requirements that undermine both the program's goals and the agency's efforts. Moreover, program revenues have been found to not cover administration of the Licensed Breeder Program; yet despite these disproportionately high administrative costs, the Commission found that Texans still primarily rely on protections that predate the program."

In August of 2020, the American Kennel Club commented on the Sunset Advisory Commission's recommendation to eliminate the Licensed Breeders Program. In their statement, the AKC states that they support reasonable and enforceable laws that protect the welfare and health of dogs and do not restrict the rights of breeders and owners who meet their responsibilities. The text of the full statement can be found [here](#). Unfortunately, even with numerous comments, the support of the AKC, and the Sunset Advisory Commission's proposal to eliminate the Licensed Breeders Program, THLN and the animal extremist legislators and lobbyists, convinced the commission to keep the Licensed Breeders Program. On THLN's website, they boast "We Saved The Licensed Breeders' Program" and "The Good News: after intense grassroots and lobby outreach, the Commission has voted to MAINTAIN the Texas Licensed Breeders Program and continue to stop puppy mills from operating across Texas." To read the article click [HERE](#)



2021 Legislative Session

There are several animal related bills that THLN is highlighting on their website. The information regarding these bills can sometimes be difficult to track due to changes as they move through the legislative process. As an example, HB 873 one of the four bills dealing with the restraint of dogs, no longer appears as it did on the website originally. Here is a listing of animal related bills being pushed by THLN this session in the state of Texas:

House Bill 91- authored by Eddie Lucio III (his father is State Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.), this bill has been presented in 2011, 2019, and 2021 and the title reads: "Relating to conditions of community supervision for defendants convicted of certain criminal offenses involving animals." It basically sets forth the conditions that if a judge grants community supervision of an offense under penal codes 42.09; 42.091; 42.092; 42.10 or 42.105; the judge may require the defendant to relinquish custody of any animals in the defendant's possession; prohibit the defendant from possessing or exercising control over any animals or residing in a household where animals are present; or require the defendant to participate in a psychological counseling or other appropriate treatment program for a period to be determined by the court. The above listed penal codes are, in order, cruelty to livestock, attack on an assistance animal; cruelty to non-livestock animals; dog fighting or cock fighting.

- HB121- authored by Minjarez and relates to the adoption of cats and dogs previously used for research. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2018
- HB 337- authored by Rosenthal and relating to the intake and disposition records of animal shelters and releasing agencies. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020
- HB 386- authored by Pacheco and relating to the unlawful restraint of a dog; creating a criminal offense. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020
- HB 399- authored by Shaheen and relating to a dog's restraint and shelter. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020
- HB 543- authored by White and relating to the regulation of working animals by a political subdivision. (Working Animal Protection Act)
- HB 592- authored by Turner and relating to a sales and use tax exemption for animals adopted from or sold by animal rescue groups (Companion to SB 227) THLN Endorsed Candidate 2018, 2020
- HB 708- authored by Shaheen and relating to creating the criminal offense of possession of an animal by a person who has been previously convicted of an offense involving animal cruelty. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020



- HB 873- authored by Collier and relating to the unlawful restraining of a dog; creating a criminal offense. (Companion to SB 474)

Senate Bills

- SB 48- authored by Zaffirini and relating to conditions of community supervision for defendants convicted of certain criminal offenses involving animals. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020
- SB 197- authored by Nelson and relating to a sales and use tax exemption for animals adopted from or sold by nonprofit animal welfare organizations. THLN Endorsed Candidate 2020
- SB 227- authored by Paxton and relating to a sales tax and exemption for animals adopted from or sold by animal rescue groups. (Companion to HB 592)
- SB 474- authored by Lucio Jr and relating to the unlawful restraining of a dog; creating a criminal offense. (Companion to HB 873) THLN endorsed candidate 2020

It is very apparent that THLN's endorsed candidates, while sponsoring other bills as well, can be counted upon to author, co-author, or sponsor THLN's animal extremist leaning bills.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com

THLN's legislative priority for 2021 is to pass the Safe Outdoor Dogs Legislation (HB 873) and its companion bill SB 474.

On THLN's website under their Legislative Priorities tab it states:

"The Issue: Currently, Texas state law attempts to define the standards of shelter for animals that are left outdoors. However, the law is not working as intended, which means that animals suffer especially in extreme conditions. In such conditions, dogs left outside become aggressive and agitated, desperate for shelter and relief from the elements. Law enforcement cannot intervene in this kind of cruelty due to the current law requiring a mandatory warning before taking action. This warning stays in effect for twenty-four hours and is required each time, even for the same dog outside on the same chain day after day. In short, the situation is never resolved until a tragedy has struck a community member or the animal itself.

The Solution: The Texas Humane Legislation Network (THLN) has been working since 2015 to clarify the current law and ensure Texas keeps outdoor dogs safe-safe for them and safe for us. During the upcoming legislative session beginning in January, THLN is more dedicated than ever to passing the "safe outdoor dogs" bill, HB 873."

<https://www.thln.org/legislative-priorities>

Restraint (Tethering) of a Dog

THLN endorsed candidates have authored/sponsored FOUR bills relating to the unlawful restraint of a dog. Protect The Harvest believes strongly in animal welfare and with extreme temperatures in the summer, as well as the recent polar vortex that crippled over 70% of the state, we absolutely agree with the use of PROPER restraint as well as proper shelter. Tethering, as a restraint itself, is not abusive, nor should it be a criminal offense. Many hunting dogs and working dogs are successfully trained with a tethering system.

HB 873's language is contradictory. In the Definitions section, "restraint means a chain, rope..." yet under the Unlawful Restraint of a Dog; Offense, it specifically outlaws the use of a chain to tether. Dogs can, do and will chew through anything they can if they want to escape a tether. In addition, there is already a statute in place on the restraint/tethering of dogs that is enforceable and complete, Health and Safety Code Sec. 821.077. Unlawful Restraint of Dog



AKC Weighs In Regarding the New Tethering Bills

The American Kennel Club (AKC) has issued their statement on tethering. In part, their statement reads "Texas House Bill 873, which seeks to rewrite the state's dog tethering law...would replace Texas' current dog tethering statutes with updated provisions. The bill would allow for a dog to be kept outside and unattended if it is provided adequate shelter, the area the dog is kept in allows it to avoid standing water, provides shade from direct sunlight, and is provided potable water. The bill would not allow the restraint of a dog kept outside and unattended by use of a chain restraint, a weighted chain, or does not meet the minimum length standards (10 feet, or 5 times the length of the dog, whichever is greater)."

HB 873 also updates exceptions under the tethering restrictions, however, exceptions are very easily changed in subsequent bills as those who are in animal extremist groups well know.

The full text of HB 873 can be found [HERE](#)

American Dog Breeders Association Statement on Dog Containment

The American Dog Breeders Association's (ADBA) statement on dog containment (<https://adbadog.com/dog-containment/>) falls under the heading of Responsible Ownership. Among other things, "ADBA favors all forms of dog containment as long as the dog is trained, socialized, exercised and given proper attention, the containment method is not a factor in its behavior or temperament. Dog behavior only becomes problematic when a dog is not properly trained, not properly socialized, and not given proper attention."



The ADBA has this to say about tethering:

“A strong center mount attachment may be employed to safely tether a dog. That mount may be made of a length of rebar bent into a hairpin shape and sunk in cement two feet deep, leaving four inches of the bend above ground or any other strong, escape-proof type mount, including an automobile axel. Large steel O-ring complete with a swivel to correct any twisting of the chain of sufficient strength that it cannot be broken. The chain must be at a minimum five times the length of the dog. The collar should be of buckle type, leather or nylon – not chain – with a welded O-ring with swivel for chain attachment and of a strength and quality that is equivalent to the test strength of the chain. The collar should be tight enough to prevent escape while loose enough to allow two fingers to be able to slip under it. Collars must be checked regularly to insure proper fit. Remove any entanglement obstacles from the immediate area. Adequate shelter must be provided along the perimeter of the tether area to protect the dog comfortably from the elements. Shade must be available at all times of the day. The dog should have daily off tether times each day for training, play, and/or attention. A perimeter fence should be in place to prevent the trespass by children or animals not belonging to the dog owner. Constant inspection and maintenance is required of any containment type used.”

Cornell University Study

Cornell University published a study on “Comparison of Tethering and Pen Confinement” showing the difference in activity, temperament, standing on hind legs, lying in shelters, eating food, pacing etc., and found that while tethering is “intuitively less acceptable, the fact that the dogs rarely pulled at their chains and the lack of major differences in behavior indicate that tethering may be an acceptable housing method, but this may depend on the breed and experience of the dog. Our findings provide no evidence that tethering was any more or less detrimental to dog welfare than being housed in pens.”

To review click [HERE](#)



Texas Humane Legislation Network is NOT a Friend to Animals

Groups that ascribe to an animal extremist ideology are not a friend to animals, no matter what they claim. THLN's animal extremist ideology is apparent by simply reviewing their Board and Advisory Board's heavy connections with other known animal extremist groups like the HSUS, ASPCA, ALDF, American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC) and Animal Wellness Action (AWA). Additional evidence of their animal extremist ideology is their push to indoctrinate the children of Texas via schools with the Junior Advocacy Program. THLN's Humane Library lists books that clearly were written to influence children and to become vegan. THLN's list of Endorsed Candidates, and the multiple attempts to introduce either new egregious and overreaching legislation, or repeat legislation that failed previously, and attempting to add to existing animal cruelty statutes making them even more confusing and overreaching, makes their ideology even more clear.

All of these add up to demonstrating animal extremist ideology. The goal of animal extremist groups is to end animal ownership and animals in human care. Their strategy is to go about it incrementally, in small bites so that the general public does not notice until it is too late. Texas, it is time to push back against the tyrannical grip that THLN is attempting to place on your animals, on your livelihood and even your children.

This is Part 3 of a 3 part series.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



Main Office 844-360-8300
Email: Info@protecttheharvest.com