



HUMANE SOCIETY  
WILDLIFE LAND TRUST.

# Wildlife NOTES

## Becoming an Effective Animal Advocate

Decisions affecting animals are made all the time by our elected officials. Senators and representatives consider laws that protect wildlife and wildlife habitat, farm animals, and animals used in research. You can influence their decisions by calling, writing or visiting them – as an individual or as part of a group. Here are some tips on how to be heard.

### DOs

- ✓ Do know who represents you at all levels of government.
- ✓ Do identify yourself by name and organization (if any).
- ✓ Do state a clear and concise objective.
- ✓ Do explain why the issue is important to you personally.
- ✓ Do make an effort to appear at town meetings and other events, and be sure they hear you ask at least one question on animal issues at each event.
- ✓ Do mention how important it is for animal programs to be adequately funded.
- ✓ Do join, create, or revitalize state groups to give your cause more clout.
- ✓ Do join forces with other types of groups that may have the same position as you even if for different reasons
- ✓ Do wear many hats—not just your animal advocate hat. Identify yourself as a parent, businessperson, campaign contributor, or fellow church/club/team member.
- ✓ Do work with legislative staff.
- ✓ Do get involved in legislative campaigns—as an individual, not as a nonprofit group.
- ✓ Do learn how to work with your local press.
- ✓ Do respond to action alerts sent by The HSUS and other groups.

### DON'Ts

- ✗ Don't threaten or antagonize a legislator.
- ✗ Don't refer to bills by their numbers alone.
- ✗ Don't ever lie to or mislead a legislator.
- ✗ Don't overwhelm a legislator with too much information or paperwork.
- ✗ Don't forget to thank someone who was helpful.
- ✗ Don't use terms or abbreviations without explaining their meaning.

### *How Kids Speak Up for Animals*

*Getting children involved in advocacy is not only time well-spent together but also provides the opportunity to pass on your values of care and compassion for all living creatures.*

It's never too early to learn the importance of speaking up for your beliefs. Here are some ideas:

If you can't write a letter, draw a picture and have an adult help you send it.

Join an animal protection group, like Humane Society Youth. That way you can receive alerts about upcoming legislative decisions.

Does your school offer an alternative to dissection? If not, ask if you can make a presentation to the faculty. Do your research first!

Ask your local library if you can put up a display about animal protection.

Check with local emergency preparedness authorities to learn the disaster plans for people with pets in your area. Share the information with pet guardians you know.

*More age-appropriate projects and ideas at [www.humanesocietyyouth.org](http://www.humanesocietyyouth.org).*