



THERE'S A LINE IN THE SAND THAT EXTENDS ACROSS ALABAMA

Today, HB 74, a bill to strengthen the penalties for cockfighting was to be heard on the House Floor, third on the agenda. The bill passed House Committee and came out of rules earlier this week. Here are the facts:

Cockfighting is illegal in all 50 states, is a felony in 39 and has been illegal in Alabama since 1896. Alabama's current penalty is the weakest in the nation, a maximum \$50 dollar fine. HB74 makes it a class A misdemeanor on first offense, a Class C felony on second offence, charges spectators and makes it a crime to allow a minor child to attend a cockfight

A 2009 poll of Alabama voters, conducted by Mason-Dixon polling company revealed that 82% of voters polled favored stronger penalties and believed cockfighting is cruel and inhumane.

Representative Jim Barton was courageous enough to sponsor this legislation and you should take time to thank him. E mail jbarton@msg-inc.com

The AGBA, Alabama Gamefowl Breeder's Association has hired a lobbyist, Greg Jones, for 3 years running, to oppose this legislation.

Their spokesperson, D'Renda Lewis posted this today on gamerooster.com. Pay particular attention to the plan of action.

As I stated above the bill was brought out of order and placed on the special order calendar for today. A political move done with the intention of running the bill through.

A small group of us and I'm talking small arrived before the session and hit the hallways talking the representatives.

The bill was blocked from coming to the floor today. A substitute calendar was offered bringing a more important bill to the top and putting HB74 at the bottom. A filibuster took place until about 1:30 when the vote to accept the substitute calendar took place and the substitute was adopted. We live to fight another day.

Let me stress HB74 is not dead. It could be called back up at any time. We don't expect it too, however don't be surprised if an attempt is made. If it is brought back up be prepared to go, and again you may not have a notice. And we need more than a few people there!

Damn it guys we dodged a freakin bullet today! When there is bill going to the floor be in the Gallery! Don't take for granted we'll be able to dodge the next bullit. We came close today boys. You don't know how close.

Now here is the new plan of action:

1. Begin going to see your representative in your district. Do this in your district not at the statehouse. Visit in person, take a small token of appreciation to them, a box of candy, small bouquet of flowers, you get my drift, a small token. Visit in person.
2. Begin making contact with your Senator because we still have SB299 out there.
3. Begin making contact with the Senate Judiciary Committee. I will post numbers later.
4. If HB74 rears it's ugly head again be prepared to do what it takes to deal with it. That is why we need personal contact between you and your representative!
5. Last but not least get your checkbook out and mail in your dues, no excuses and make another check out for a donation to ALGBA because your hobby just got a lot more expensive.

"Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom"

****This post does not represent anything other than the personal opinion of Sweetwater****

In addition to the AGBA sending out action alerts to kill the bill, the world's best known cockfighting website, sabong, has a legislative action alert for Alabama. It can be viewed at:

<http://www.sabong.net.ph/forum/showthread.php?t=52602>

Understand,a third world country has an action alert in Alabama.

Today, 32 representatives asked the Speaker of the House to keep the bill from being heard. They are convinced that their districts are full of cockfighters who oppose the bill. Last year, cockfighters in Georgia, where the penalty is much stronger, called our statehouse to kill the bill. Now we have a third world county working to kill the bill...seriously???

Seriously. An organized group of people, who by their own admission, are breaking the law, are successfully lobbying OUR legislature to keep the penalties low so they can afford to continue to break the law. This is not a few guys behind the barn on a Sunday watching a few birds fight. This is a large scale, organized group, attracting cockfighters from states where it is a felony , to our beautiful Alabama, to commit a crime. Is this really how the rest of the world views Alabama?

You decide what side of the line you stand on. It's your time to remind some legislators, as often as you like, that they represent law abiding citizens of this state too. They are there to represent all of us who live here and abide by the law, not to play chicken.