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*Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
State Senator André Jacque
October 17th, 2019*

Chairman Spiros and Members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

Thank you for holding this hearing on Assembly Bill 152, also known as the Protecting Animals of Wisconsin, or PAW Act. I am proud to have re-introduced this common-sense bi-partisan legislation with Rep. Wichgers. The PAW Act more effectively address the crime of sexual contact with an animal by increasing the penalty to a felony, making sexual contact a sex crime, increasing penalties for repeat offenses, and making a technical change to the definition of sexual contact with an animal to prohibit perpetrators from using any body part or object on an animal for sexual gratification, not just their sex organ- closing a loophole that has unfortunately been exploited. These changes were drafted in consultation with and at the request of district attorneys, law enforcement agencies, farmers, and animal advocacy groups with a broad coalition of support. Last session our reform passed this committee last session unanimously, as well as the full State Assembly on a voice vote, and this session it passed the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee unanimously and the full Senate by voice vote.

The sexual abuse of an animal can take many different forms, and be driven by any number of different motives—ranging from sexual gratification to financial gain. As with other forms of animal abuse, bestiality overlaps significantly with violence perpetrated against humans, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. A study of 44,000 adult sex offenders found that prior sexual abuse of animals is the number one behavioral predictor for sexual abuse of a child, and individuals who sexually abuse animals are very frequently violent, predatory sex offenders who share many common traits with pedophiles. A number of websites have been used frequently to facilitate animal sexual abuse, which is why the PAW Act makes it illegal to advertise, offer, sell, transfer or purchase an animal with the intent for it to be used for sexual contact, or to photograph or film a person engaged in sexual contact with an animal, or to possess or distribute such materials. The PAW Act makes it a felony to force a child to watch a sexual act with an animal. Since current law often allows those who abuse animals to escape with little to no punishment, enabling the law to effectively intervene in cases of animal sexual abuse is likely to also prevent future crimes against humans.

Sexual abuse of animals is currently a felony in twenty three states. The PAW Act's proposed felony penalty would appropriately prohibit the abuser from participating in certain state licensed programs such as the child foster network, operating a child care service, and driving a school bus.

Thank you for your consideration of the PAW Act.



CHUCK WICHGERS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 83rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

October 17, 2019

Assembly Bill 152

State Representative Chuck Wichgers, 83rd Assembly District

Chairman Spiros and Committee Members,

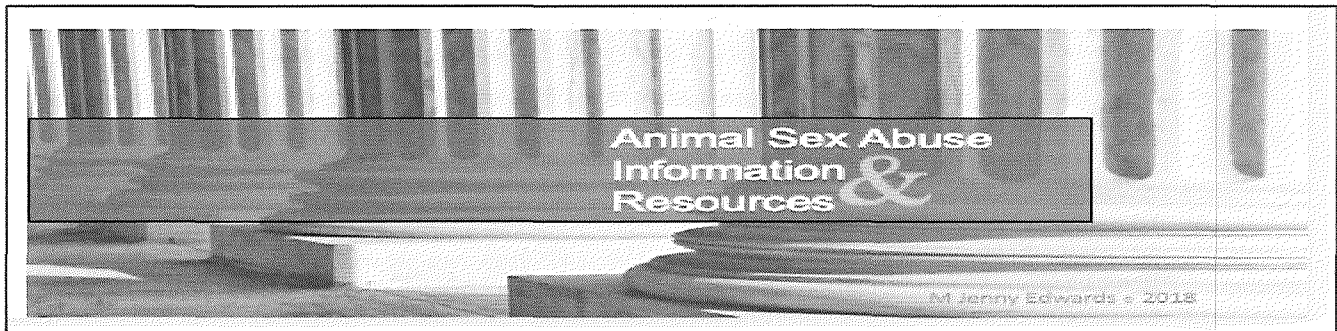
Thank you for hearing my testimony today on AB 152/SB 139 relating to sexual contact with an animal.

I am co-authoring this legislation with Sen. Jacque because of a loophole in our current laws. This was revealed in a criminal case in Sen. Jacque's district two years ago. The bill makes a technical change to the definition of sexual contact with an animal to prohibit perpetrators from using any body part or object on an animal for sexual gratification, not just their sex organ.

AB 152 increases the penalty to a Class H felony from a Class A misdemeanor for this heinous crime. Also, felony classifications are increased for second or subsequent violations of this crime and those involving children.

This legislation passed the respective Assembly and Senate Committees last session and had an affirmative vote on the Assembly floor. Last week, the Senate passed this bill on a voice vote. In addition, it has the support of various groups around the state, including the Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association, Badger State Sheriffs' Association, and the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.



October 16, 2019

Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Re: AB 152 relating to sexual contact with an animal and providing a penalty

I am a criminologist and national subject matter expert on criminal justice and public safety issues related to the sexual abuse and exploitation of animals and am writing in support of AB 152. This is an important piece of legislation that protects Wisconsin citizens as well as its animals from a pervasive and often deadly form of sexual assault.

In my experience, Wisconsin has encountered some of the most dangerous and deviant animal sex offenders, some of who were highlighted in a recently published study of my work in the Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law¹. This analysis of bestiality-related arrests throughout the United States over a 40-year period indicates that:

- **Nearly one-third of bestiality offenders also sexually abuse children.** Half of these children are under the age of 10, and *one in seven children are forced to have sex with the family pet.*
 - Christian and Dannie Stolfus, 19 and 18 (Grant) were arrested for having sex with at least six family members as well as a cow and a horse over a 4-year period.
 - Nicholas Bradley, 22 (Dodge) was arrested in 2015 for sodomizing his girlfriend's dog. In 2016 he was arrested in Alaska for sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl.
 - Kenneth Risch, 36 (Taylor) had a prior history of assault and battery, embezzlement, and other charges at the time he was convicted of felony sexual assault of a child in 2012. In 2013 he was arrested for having sex with a dog.
 - Barry Herbeck, 36 (Dodge) was convicted in 1989 of raping his 6-year-old stepdaughter. In 1998 he was convicted for sodomizing and killing numerous cats and dogs; some of them in front of children.
 - Tod Bergemann, 25 (Brown) had a long history of sexual acts with family members, including his sister, two foster brothers, a 2-year-old baby, and incest with both parents. In 1997 he admitted to having sex with the family dog multiple times and was deemed a sexually violent predator. In one incident he forced another child to have sex with the dog and then posted the images online to threaten her with silence.
 - Dyllon Lazic, 19 (Waupaca) sexually assaulted multiple children over a 5-year period. One of the victims was made to watch him have sex with a dog.
- **More than one-quarter of arrests result in the significant injury or death of one or more animals.** Some violent offenders torture and mutilate their animals for sexual motivation. In other, more deviant cases, the offenders kill the animal first and then have sex with the animal's corpse.
 - Sterling Rachwal, 18-54 (Brown) brutalized, mutilated and killed numerous horses in at least six Wisconsin counties over a 30-year period. Regardless of the number of charges, or the heinous acts committed on the

¹ Edwards M J (2019). Arrest and Prosecution of Animal Sex Abuse (Bestiality) Offenders in the United States, 1975-2015. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 47 (3). DOI: 10.29158/JAAPL.003836-19. Available online at <http://jaapl.org/content/early/2019/05/16/JAAPL.003836-19>

animals he raped with his fist and with broom handles, he we never successfully charged with anything more than a misdemeanor. He's currently serving 2 years' probation for his most recent rapes.

- Bryan Hathaway, 24 (Douglas) already had a juvie record for weapons, lewd behavior, property damage, and animal cruelty at the time of his arrest in 2005, when he shot and killed a horse for the purpose of having sex with it. In 2006 he was arrested for having sex with a roadkill deer. In 2014 he was arrested for theft and assaulting a police officer.
 - John Bullock, 24 (Racine) was arrested for raping an unconscious woman. Then, his roommate Damonta Jones, 25 brought his live pet snake into the bedroom and helped Bullock rape her once again, this time with the snake. Bullock has a prior criminal history and Jones is a registered sex offender. Neither man was charged with bestiality.
- **More than half (53%) of animal sex offenders have a criminal history** involving interpersonal and domestic violence, child pornography, animal cruelty, substance abuse, and other criminal behavior.
- Jared Kreft, 30 (Marathon) was arrested for breaking into a barn where he smoked pot and had sex with a horse. He had previously been arrested for drug possession and told officers that viewing animal pornography had motivated him to have sex with an animal. He received 2 years' probation for the drug charges; the bestiality charges were dropped.
 - Jamie Garcia, 33 (Outagamie) was arrested after posting images on the Internet of himself having sex with his mare. One of his online posts said he'd like to meet others near his home who would like to have sex with his horse. At the time of his arrest, he was in possession of crystal meth and admitted to having had sex with multiple animals since he was a teenager. He received 12 months' probation for the bestiality charge.
 - Amy Lew, 20 (Eau Claire) had 83,000 subscribers on her YouTube channel where she posted "how-to" videos and live chats about having sex with her dog. She and her boyfriend were arrested in Florida and extradited to Wisconsin, where the boyfriend had an outstanding warrant for felony child pornography and where Lew had videotaped herself performing sexual acts in public. Lew was charged with disorderly conduct, and lewd and lascivious behavior instead of bestiality.
 - Mackenzie Behrmann, 18 (Manitowoc) had previously been arrested for child sexual assault and was under investigation for child pornography when officers found videos of him having sex with two different dogs. He was charged with 2 counts of sexual assault of a child and the bestiality charges were ignored.
- **Animal sex offenders are nearly four time more likely to reoffend** than people convicted of human sex offenses². What's alarming about that number is a) these are the cases we know about, which is likely lower than the actual number who reoffend b) the statistic does not include human sex offenders who sexually assault animals after being released, and c) many offenders who are rearrested are not returned to prison or sent for sex addition or other counseling.

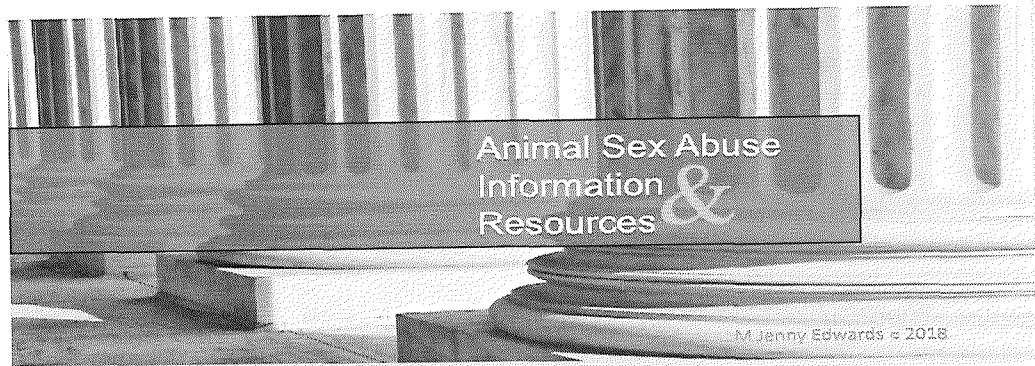
The bottom line is that bestiality is an insidious crime that deserves our serious attention. It is a complex behavior that often takes years to detect, and the victim is not able to speak out.

AB 152 is a strong, enforceable bill, and I urge that it be passed, making bestiality a felony crime in Wisconsin.

Regards,
M. Jenny Edwards

M. Jenny Edwards
Criminologist, Subject Matter Expert
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² U.S. Dept. of Justice, *Special Report on Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released from State Prison: a 9-year follow-up (2005-2015)*. May 2019. Available online at <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rsorsp9yfu0514.pdf>. According to this report, among 20,195 prisoners, 8% reoffended within a nine-year period following release.



Animal Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Statistics¹

Animal sexual abuse is intentional sexual contact between a person and an animal that may result in injury or death (of the person or the animal); exploitation involves the filming, photographing, breeding, or sharing animals for sexual purposes.

There's no single profile of an animal sex offender

- 86% are men aged 18 to 82, with a mean age of 38
- 13% are women between the ages of 18 and 61, with a mean age of 34.
- 63% of female offenders act as part of a male/female couple
- 53% of animal sex offenders have a criminal history involving
 - sexual abuse (animals & children),
 - child pornography, and
 - interpersonal & domestic violence,
- 34% have also sexually abused children or adults
- 28% are repeat animal sex offenders
- 8% have deviant sexual interests including pedophilia, S&M, necrophilia, and zoophilia
- 4% are registered child sex offenders

A wide range of sex acts occur

- 64% involve rape, penetration, or sodomy of animals
- 8% are violent sex acts resulting in serious injury or death of the animals
- 7% involve the coercion of a child or adult who is forced to have sex with an animal in front of their abuser
 - Most of these acts are filmed and posted online

Prosecution and Sentencing varies

- 64% of offenders are prosecuted; the average sentence is 2 years' probation
- 25% of bestiality cases are declined for prosecution
- 10% of convicted offenders are ordered to register as sex offenders

¹ Edwards MJ. Arrest and Prosecution of Animal Sex Abuse (Bestiality) Offenders in the U.S., 1975-2015. *J Amer Acad Psychiatry and Law*, 47 (2). 2019. Available online at <http://jaapl.org/content/early/2019/05/16/JAAPL.003836-19>

SUPPORT AB 152

Strengthen the Animal Sexual Abuse Law

What is animal sexual abuse?

It is the sexual molestation of an animal by a human. Animal sexual abuse, like rape, is the eroticization of violence, control and exploitation.

Why does it matter?

Animal sexual abuse is the single strongest predictor of increased risk for committing child sexual abuse.

A study of 44,202 adult males evaluated for sexual misconduct found that sexual contact with animals is the single largest risk factor and strongest predictor of increased risk for sexually molesting a child.

Some studies have found high rates of sexual assault of animals in the backgrounds of serial sexual homicide perpetrators. This is one reason why bestiality and other forms of animal cruelty are now tracked by the FBI as a Group A offense in the National Incident Based Reporting System, in the same category as rape and murder.

Isn't it already illegal?

Wisconsin Chapter 994, Crimes Against Sexual Morality, makes it a crime for anyone to commit an act of sexual gratification using his or her sex organ, mouth, or anus and the sex organ, mouth, or anus of an animal. Only prohibiting contact with a sex organ is a major loophole in the law that has caused convictions to be overturned on appeal.

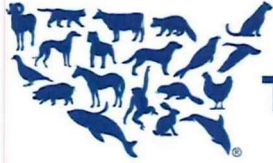
In addition, Wisconsin's animal cruelty law only applies in cases where there is provable physical injury to the animal. Many acts of animal sexual abuse are filmed and discovered well after the incident occurs, so the requisite animal or medical evidence to substantiate physical injury cannot be recovered.

Finally, animals, like women and children, are traded for sex and frequently used in the pornography industry. This is not explicitly prohibited under current law.

Establishing animal sexual abuse as a separate crime allows law enforcement to identify potentially dangerous sexual predators in their community.

AB 152:

- Prohibits engaging in sexual contact with animals with any part of the body or an object;
- Prohibits promoting, advertising, offering, or soliciting animals for sex;
- Prohibits the creation and distribution of animal pornography;
- Prohibits engaging in sexual contact with animals in the presence of a minor or coercing others;
- Increases the penalty from misdemeanor to a felony;
- Requires the convicted person to refrain from contact with animals;
- Requires psychological assessment;
- Exempts veterinary procedures, accepted animal husbandry and animal care, artificial insemination, and conformation judging.



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

**Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 152
Presented to the Assembly Committee on
Criminal Justice and Public Safety
by Megan Nicholson, Wisconsin State Director
The Humane Society of the United States**

October 17, 2019

Chairman Spiros and fellow Committee Members:

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the nation's largest animal protection organization, and our Wisconsin supporters and members, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of Assembly Bill 152.

Animal sexual abuse is a serious crime, often perpetrated by offenders who extend their criminal activity to human beings. In Wisconsin an individual by the name of Sterling Rachwal has put a notorious face to animal sexual abuse for more than three decades; he's a recidivist in every sense of the word. It's because of Rachwal's repeated crimes that the Wisconsin public and many members of our state law enforcement have become aware of animal sexual abuse and the inability of our current law to adequately respond.

But the bill before us today is not about one individual; just last month in Manawa, a child victim told police that his alleged abuser had also sexually assaulted a dog in front of him. and investigators found videos of child and animal sexual abuse on the offender's phone. According to research on popular bestiality websites, sexual abuse of animals is happening in many areas of our state, both urban and rural.

We also know that animal sexual abuse is clearly linked to human crime and cruelty. The FBI has found high rates of sexual assault of animals in the backgrounds of serial sexual homicide predators, which is why bestiality and other forms of animal cruelty are now tracked by the FBI as a Group A offense in the National Incident Based Reporting System, in the same category as rape and murder.

The Wisconsin legislature decided in 1975 to prohibit the sexual abuse of animals. As the internet has changed our culture and ability to communicate, the language addressing animal sexual abuse in our current law, Ch. 944, has become outdated and is no longer sufficient to prosecute the crime and has resulted in overturned convictions.

When Sterling Rachwal was arrested last year, he was only able to be prosecuted for his assault because he caused physical harm to a horse. He was caught red-handed, but in other situations current law would only apply if a veterinarian could attest that the animal sustained physical harm and it could be proven the injury was the result of the sexual assault. Many acts of animal sexual abuse are filmed and discovered well after the incident occurs — often during an investigation of other crimes, so the requisite animal or medical evidence to substantiate physical injury cannot be recovered.

Deficiencies in Wisconsin's current law include:

- A person can only be prosecuted if they use their sex organ to commit the act;
- It does not require psychological assessment or treatment;
- It does not prohibit the offender from owning or having contact with other animals;
- It does not allow for the seizure of victimized animals if the abuser is the owner or any other protocols that apply to other forms of animal cruelty;
- It does not prohibit trading animals for sex. Increasingly, the Internet facilitates this crime and allows it to flourish. Perpetrators use various websites to seek out one another where they trade animals for sexual purposes. Even on common websites we have found multiple ads from people in Wisconsin seeking or offering animals for sexual purposes.

The bill before you would provide a much-needed correction to each of those deficiencies.

In addition, A.B. 152 would increase the penalty for animal sexual abuse to a felony, a provision we support -- not simply for the punishment, but because a felony conviction will prevent the offender from being employed in certain state licensed programs such as being a foster parent, operating a daycare or driving a school bus where they have unsupervised access to children. Because some animal sexual abusers are repeat offenders who seek out opportunities to be close to animals, it also gives employers such as boarding kennels, animal shelters, and veterinarians the ability to prevent potentially dangerous predators from gaining employment in their business and away from the animals with which they've been entrusted.

Importantly, A.B. 152 exempts practices related to veterinary care, artificial insemination, animal husbandry, animal care, and conformation judging.

For the reasons outlined in this testimony, I ask that you support A.B. 152 to strengthen Wisconsin's law to protect animals from sexual abuse. Thank you.



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August 15, 2019

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Senator André Jacque
Wisconsin Legislature
Room 7 South
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Re: Animal Legal Defense Fund's Support of SB 139/AB 159

Dear Senator Jacque:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a letter in support of Senate Bill 139/Assembly Bill 159, "an Act relating to sexual contact with an animal and providing a penalty." This bill addresses a significant issue facing animals in Wisconsin—the law's current failure to adequately protect them from sexual abuse by humans.

By way of introduction, I am an attorney for the Criminal Justice Program at the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF). Founded in 1979, ALDF is a national nonprofit organization of attorneys dedicated to protecting the lives and advancing the interests of animals through the legal system. Through our Criminal Justice Program, ALDF provides free training and legal support to prosecutors and law enforcement handling animal abuse and neglect cases throughout the country, including Wisconsin.

In our work opposing animal cruelty, we too often hear of cases where animals have been subject to sexualized abuse, including the very sort of assaults this bill would prohibit. We know that the sexual abuse of an animal can take many different forms, and be driven by any number of different motives—ranging from sexual gratification

All our clients are innocent



to financial gain. These assaults result in a variety of harms to the animal victim, including psychological trauma, physical injury, and death.

Our work also makes us aware of a growing body of data on bestiality, indicating that sexual abuse and exploitation of animals endangers both animals and humans. As with other forms of animal abuse, bestiality overlaps significantly with violence perpetrated against humans, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse.

Therefore enabling the law to effectively intervene on behalf of animal victims of bestiality benefits human victims as well, and may in fact prevent future crimes against humans.

Unfortunately, despite the dangers posed by bestiality both to animals and humans, Wisconsin's current law does not adequately address these concerns. The current law narrowly defines sexual assault of an animal, omitting a number of different motivations and methods of assault. Senate Bill 139/Assembly Bill 159 would not only expand this definition, but would also provide increased penalties for assaults that occur in the presence of a minor. Finally, this bill would prevent future violations by prohibiting the perpetrator from owning animals, and by requiring psychological evaluation and counseling for those convicted of bestiality.

We applaud your efforts to strengthen Wisconsin's law by closing the legal gap that fails to adequately address sexual assault of animals. In this you have our full support.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Wood, Esq.
Criminal Justice Program Staff Attorney
Animal Legal Defense Fund
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Lora Dunn, Esq.
Criminal Justice Program Director
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THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

SB 139

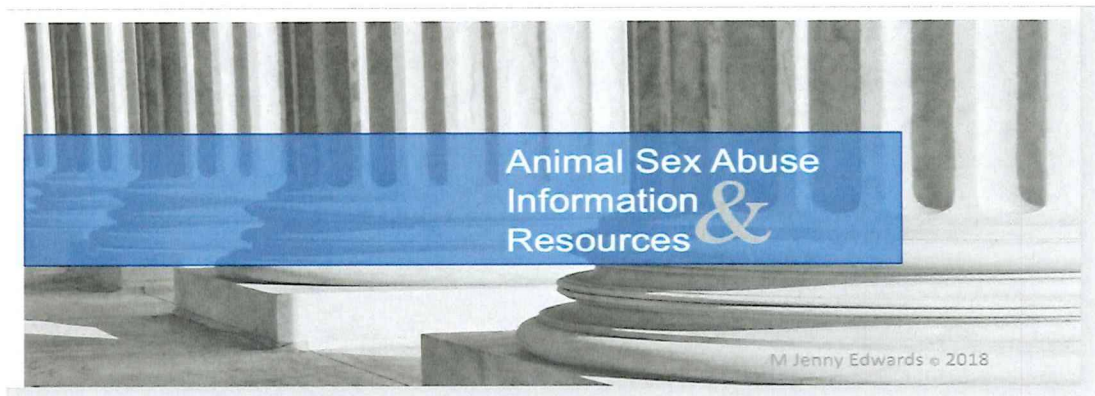
Changes from AB 666

SB 139 leaves bestiality where it currently is, Chapter 944 Crimes Against Sexual Morality, and creates a new section.

- AB 666 moved it to Chapter 951 Crimes Against Animals

Why stakeholders asked for this change

1. Currently, bestiality is classified as a sex crime which allows a prosecutor to request that a convicted person be added to the sex offender registry (not done automatically). The ability to request this is lost if bestiality is moved to the animal cruelty code. Stakeholders also believe officers, prosecutors, and judges take sex crime violations more seriously than animal cruelty and are more likely to prosecute.
 - a. Adds prohibition on creating or possession animal pornography.
 - b. Additional definitions: references bodily harm and obscene material, defines animal to cover animals that are deceased.
2. By keeping it Chapter 944 Crimes Against Sexual Morality a reference to Chapter 951 Crimes Against Animals had to be added to apply procedures for seizure, impoundment, forfeiture, dispositions.
 - a. Apart from adding pornography, violations and penalties remain the same as AB 666



Animal Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Case Examples¹

Animal sexual abuse happens far more often than most of us realize:

- The number of bestiality-related arrests has risen by nearly 800% since 2000
- Every U.S. state has reported incidents of animal sexual abuse
- It occurs as often in large cities as it does in rural areas

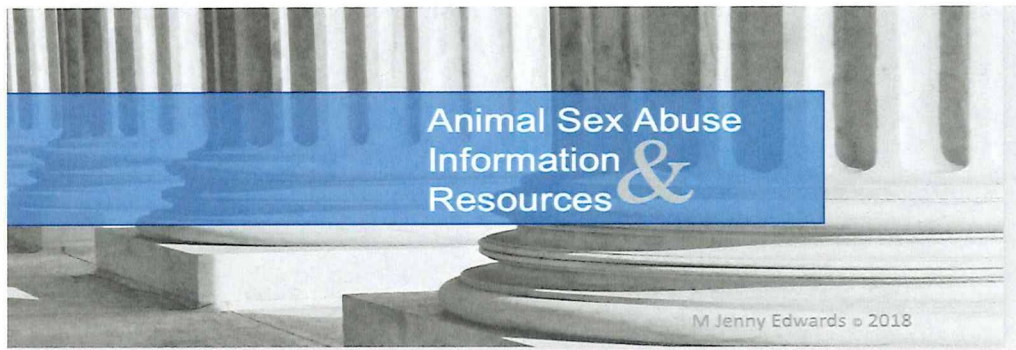
The impact of the internet is likely significant

- One popular website catering to people sexually interested in animals has over a million members
- In a 2002 study people who had a sexual preference for animals reported that, on average, they knew 90 other people involved in the lifestyle
- The Internet gives users a false sense of privacy which encourages users to connect with others to share information and animal pornography, arrange for hook-ups, and advertise their animals for sex.
- Sites like Facebook, Reddit, Craigslist, WhatsApp and others have all reported and removed graphic visual postings of sex with animals.
- An international child exploitation ring infiltrated by the FBI, discovered that offenders lured more than 100 adolescent females to perform sex acts including bestiality on camera.

Bestiality affects children and vulnerable adults as well as animals. Example cases include:

- A 47-year-old man and two women sexually assaulted their children, their children's friends, and their pets over a period of 12 years before being detected and arrested.
- A 34-year-old woman beat, tortured, and prostituted a mentally-disabled woman whom she forced to have sex with a dog for her clients.
- A home healthcare nurse beat her elderly patient with an extension cord and forced her to fellate the caretaker's dog.
- A 49-year-old man sexually abused multiple little girls whom he bound, tortured, raped with objects, insects, and small animals.
- Two men aged 24 and 25 raped an unconscious woman with a snake.

¹ Edwards MJ. Arrest and Prosecution of Animal Sex Abuse (Bestiality) Offenders in the U.S., 1975-2015. J Amer Acad Psychiatry and Law, 2019.



Animal Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Statistics¹

Animal sexual abuse is intentional sexual contact between a person and an animal that may result in injury or death (of the person or the animal); exploitation involves the filming, photographing, breeding, or sharing animals for sexual purposes.

There's no single profile of an animal sex offender

- 86% are men aged 18 to 82, with a mean age of 38
- 13% are women between the ages of 18 and 61, with a mean age of 34.
- 63% of female offenders act as part of a male/female couple
- 53% of animal sex offenders have a criminal history involving
 - sexual abuse (animals & children),
 - child pornography, and
 - interpersonal & domestic violence,
- 34% have also sexually abused children or adults
- 28% are repeat animal sex offenders
- 8% have deviant sexual interests including pedophilia, S&M, and necrophilia
- 4% are registered child sex offenders

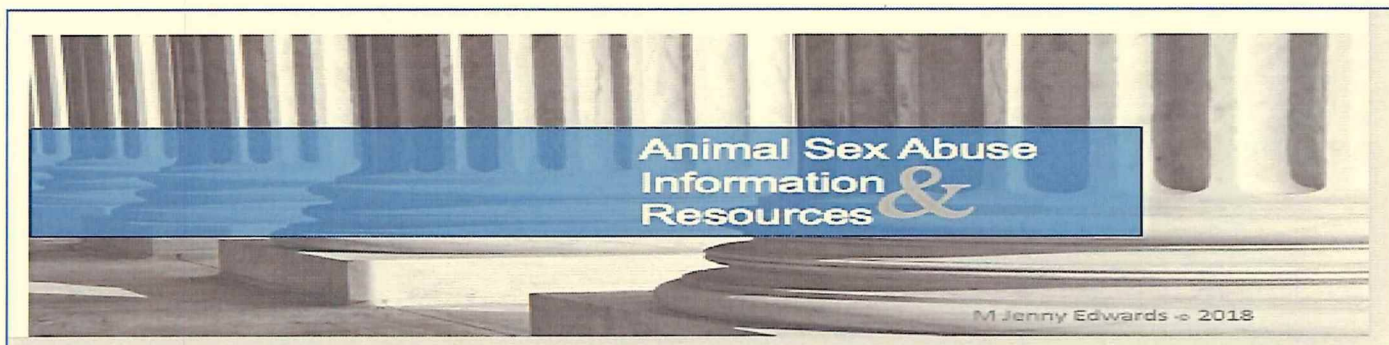
A wide range of sex acts occur

- 64% involve rape, penetration, or sodomy of animals
- 8% are violent sex acts resulting in serious injury or death of the animals
- 7% involve the coercion of a child or adult who is forced to have sex with an animal in front of their abuser
 - Most of these acts are filmed and posted online

Prosecution and Sentencing varies

- 64% of offenders are prosecuted; the average sentence is 2 years' probation
- 25% of bestiality cases are declined for prosecution
- 10% of convicted offenders are ordered to register as sex offenders

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October 17, 2019

Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
Representative John Spiros, Chair
Room 212 North - State Capitol
P O Box 8953
Madison WI. 53708-8953

RE: Public testimony related to Assembly Bill 152 - sexual contact with an animal and providing a penalty, as amended

I am a criminologist and national **subject matter expert on sexual abuse and exploitation of animals**. I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 152, having previously testified on behalf of the Wisconsin Federation of Humane Societies at the September 17 before the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety. AB 152 is an important piece of legislation that protects Wisconsin citizens as well as its animals from a pervasive and often deadly form of sexual assault.

Based on my 15 years of research and experience, **Wisconsin has encountered some of the most dangerous and deviant animal sex offenders** in the country. A lot has been written about Sterling Rachwal, who committed multiple sexually motivated acts of torture and abuse over an extended period. But in addition to Rachwal, Bryan Hathaway of Douglas County is another example of a deviant, repetitive offender. Hathaway started out with a juvenile record involving weapons. As an adult, he shot one horse for the purpose of having sex with it, and the next year had sex with a roadkill deer.

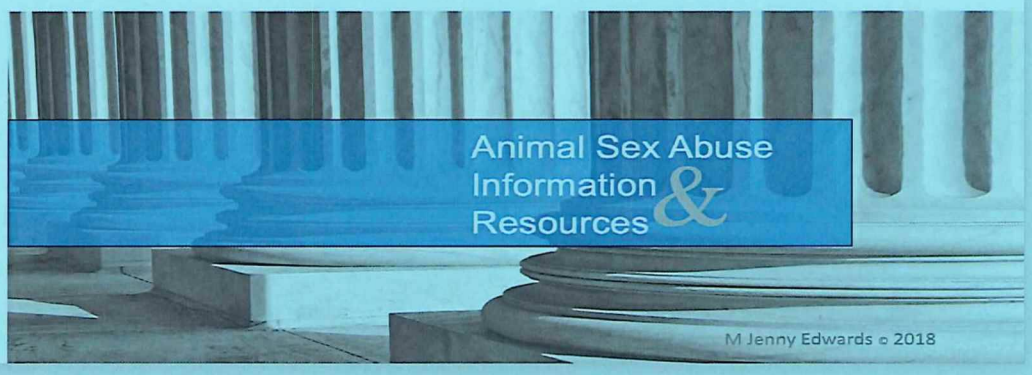
Animal sex abuse frequently involves not only multiple animal victims, but **multiple human victims** as well. In fact, nearly one-third of animal sex offenders also sexually abuse children. One Wisconsin example involved two young men in Grant County who were arrested after sexually abusing at least six family members as well as multiple farm animals over a four-year period.

Bestiality is often very difficult to detect. It frequently occurs in private, with no witnesses. Sometimes the only evidence is an image or video posted online. About **40% of bestiality incidents are discovered during the investigation of another crime**, such as domestic violence, child pornography, or online sexploitation. One example is a Manitowoc man who had a prior history of child sexual assault. While under investigation for child pornography, officers found videos of the man having sex with at least two different dogs. In another case, an Outagamie man was arrested for posting online that his horse was available for sex acts.

Animal sex abuse offenders have a high risk of reoffending. In fact, they are **four times more likely to be rearrested** than human sex offenders. Because Wisconsin law does not currently cover many types of animal sex abuse that actually occur, prosecutors may be forced to charge an offender with something other than bestiality such as property damage or disorderly conduct, and judges are reluctant to impose the maximum allowed incarceration for misdemeanor crimes. Under AB 152, the crime of animal sexual abuse and exploitation becomes a felony, which means that enforcement officers have an additional tool for investigating criminal acts, prosecutors can charge the crime appropriately as a sexual assault, and more serious penalties may lead to a reduced incidence of recidivism.

Bestiality is an insidious crime that deserves our serious attention. AB 152 is a strong, enforceable bill, and I urge that it be passed, making animal sex abuse and exploitation a felony crime in Wisconsin.

M. Jenny Edwards
Criminologist, Subject Matter Expert
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- 25% of bestiality cases are declined for prosecution
- 10% of convicted offenders are ordered to register as sex offenders

¹ Edwards MJ. Arrest and Prosecution of Animal Sex Abuse (Bestiality) Offenders in the U.S., 1975-2015. *J Amer Acad Psychiatry and Law*, 47 (2). 2019. Available online at <http://jaapl.org/content/early/2019/05/16/JAAPL.003836-19>

YES! Animal Sexual Abuse is HAPPENING in WISCONSIN

...three recent cases

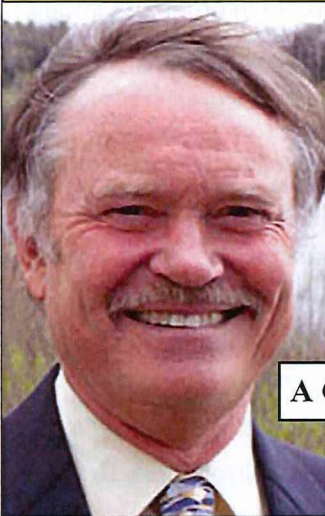
On March 15, 2019, the Dayton Daily News reported that Former Oakwood, OH, Public Safety Director Alex Bebris, now living in Wisconsin, is facing trial on child pornography charges. Court records show that found on his computer were **"images of boys and girls appearing to range in age from 1 to 10, some engaged in sexual activity, along with images of bestiality."**



A Public Health and Safety Director

<https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/oakwood-public-safety-director-gets-new-trial-date-child-porn-case/QYvZk8SfLYsAKq2mT7FrXH/>

On March 1, 2019, news broke that when investigating a child pornography case in Sauk County, WI, **police also found videos of a young girl performing sex acts on a dog, and a man instructing a dog to perform sex acts on a young girl.**



A County Board Supervisor

https://www.wiscnews.com/baraboonewsrepublic/news/local/update-sauk-county-board-member-charged-with-possessing-child-porn/article_5c287cb5-2820-566e-9c34-854ca2552079.html

A Troubled Youth

On March 14, 2019, 19-year-old Dyllon R.T. Lazic, was charged in Waupaca County with multiple child sex assault counts. **A victim states that he also witnessed the accused having sex with a dog. Child pornography, including sex with animals, was found on his cell phone.**



<https://waow.com/news/top-stories/2019/03/13/police-in-manawa-look-for-more-victims-in-child-sex-assault-case/>



October 17, 2019

Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies, Inc. thanks the authors, co-sponsors, and members of The Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for their consideration of AB 152, as amended, related to sexual contact with animals and providing a penalty.

Bestiality is a difficult topic. It would be convenient to believe that it happens only rarely, but new research indicates that bestiality occurs far more often than most people believe. It is often connected to other criminal behavior – in particular child sexual abuse, child pornography, and interpersonal violence. According to a recent study 52.3% of animal sex abusers had a prior criminal history and 28% had a history of animal sex abuse.

A primary limitation of Wisconsin's current law is the absence of language to prosecute animal pornography. The majority of animal sex abusers film or photograph the abuse, often sharing images on the Internet and through social media outlets. The Internet, on-line "special interest" groups and chat rooms have also facilitated the sharing and exchange of animals for sex and animal sexual abuse activities amongst predators and abusers.

Prior to 2016, incidents of animal cruelty – regardless of their severity – were not tracked by law enforcement or animal control agencies across the country, however, in recognition of the seriousness of bestiality and its connection to other crimes, the FBI established a new category for reporting incidents of animal sex abuse as well as other acts of animal cruelty. We agree with the FBI's recognition of the serious nature of bestiality and support the language of AB 152 which makes animal sex abuse a FELONY crime Wisconsin.

As compassionate human beings, we must deal with animal sex abuse as the serious crime that it is in our state. This crime is on the rise, its connection to other forms of abuse, especially to children, is irrefutable. Recent cases shown on the reverse side of this page demonstrate that connection and the serious nature of these crimes. We need to give law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges the tools they need to deal with this form of abuse. Felony provisions for committing the crime of bestiality provide those necessary, and overdue, tools.

Animal sex abuse should no longer be regarded as "just a misdemeanor offense." It is serious and brutal. Therefore, we ask that you support AB 152, as amended, to more adequately deal with animal sexual predators, the perpetrators of these egregious crimes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eilene K. Ribbens—Legislative Liaison, Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies, Inc.

"Serving Wisconsin's Pets and People Since 1927"