



March 8, 2013

Eric L. Bernthal, Esq.
Chair of the Board

Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Vice Chair

Kathleen M. Linehan, Esq.
Board Treasurer

Wayne Pacelle
President & CEO

Michael Markarian
Chief Program & Policy Officer

Laura Maloney
Chief Operating Officer

G. Thomas Waite III
Treasurer & CFO

Andrew N. Rowan, Ph.D.
*Chief International Officer
& Chief Scientific Officer*

Roger A. Kindler
*General Counsel
Vice President & CLO*

Janet D. Frake
Secretary

DIRECTORS

Jeffrey J. Arciniaco
Eric L. Bernthal, Esq.
Michael J. Blackwell, D.V.M., M.P.H.
Jerry Cesak
James Costos
Anita W. Coupe, Esq.
Neil B. Fang, Esq., CPA
Jane Greenspun Gale
Cathy Kangas
Jonathan D. Kaufelt, Esq.
Paula A. Kislak, D.V.M.
Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Kathleen M. Linehan, Esq.
John Mackey
Mary I. Max
Patrick L. McDonnell
Judy Ney
Sharon Lee Patrick
Judy J. Peil
Marian G. Probst
Jonathan M. Ratner
Joshua S. Reichert, Ph.D.
Walter J. Stewart, Esq.
Andrew Weinstein
Jason Weiss
David O. Wiebers, M.D.
Lona Williams

Environment Committee
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 240-0440

Re: Please **OPPOSE SB 1018's provision to legalize snares**

Dear Co-Chair Meyer, Co-Chair Gentile, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut supporters of The Humane Society of the United States, I submit this letter to **OPPOSE SB 1018**, in particular, the provision to legalize snares.

Snares are primitive types of traps that are inhumane and indiscriminate. A snare is simply a wire noose attached at one end to a stake or anchor; it catches an animal either by the neck, midsection of the body, or foot. As the trapped animal struggles, the snare tightens.

Snares are cruel.

- As the trapped animal struggles, the snare tightens. As with leghold traps, animals caught in snares often injure themselves further as they struggle. Neck/body snares strangle their victims or crush their vital organs, leading to an agonizing and often prolonged death. These traps are particularly cruel to their primary targets—coyotes and foxes—because the significant musculature around these animals' tracheas and common carotid arteries slows death.
- For animals that survive and are released: Pressure from the wire ligature can damage cellular structures, which in turn can lead to necrosis of tissues (pressure necrosis) and ultimately death in the days following release (Stocker 2005).
- The use of neck snares is seen as the least favorable option and the least humane of all legal trapping techniques (White et al. 2003).
- From Audubon magazine's September 2002 article "Maine's War on Coyotes," consider the following excerpt, which can be found at <http://audubonmagazine.org/incite/incite0209.html>:

"Killing an animal by strangling it with a wire loop often results in a slow, painful death, sometimes lasting days . . ." wrote Hulsey to his bureau director. "It would violate state humane laws to treat a domestic dog in the same manner."

Hulsey is just one of many department biologists speaking out. Last fall Wally Jakubas, the agency's top mammal scientist, got concerned when, checking 94 snared coyotes during a study to determine the genetics of the beast, he noticed a large proportion of carcasses with grotesquely swollen heads, bullet holes, fractured limbs, and broken teeth. Of particular interest to Jakubas were the animals with swollen heads—"**jellyheads,**" **the snarers call them.** When the snare doesn't close sufficiently, it constricts the jugular vein on the outside of the neck, cutting off blood returning to the heart; meanwhile, the carotid artery keeps pumping blood into the brain, eventually rupturing its vascular system. In a memo to his supervisor, Jakubas wrote: "I think it is also safe to say that [this] is an **unpleasant death.** Anyone who has had a migraine knows what it feels like to have swollen blood vessels in the head. **To have blood vessels burst because of pressure must be excruciating.**"

Snarers are indiscriminate/non-selective.

- Non-target species can suffer in these devices. Snarers cannot distinguish between coyotes and domestic dogs.
- Even when neck snarers are set and utilized correctly, they commonly catch non-target species and these can have high mortality (Phillips 1996; Chadwick et al. 1997).

WRONG APPROACH: Trapping and killing coyotes doesn't resolve problems, as a number of communities that tried lethal control have found out. Coyotes from the surrounding area quickly replace those removed. Coyotes also have an adaptive reproductive response when hunted or trapped – they breed earlier, have larger litters, etc. – and their numbers quickly rebound, even when a large percentage of their population is removed. In one study, even after as much as 75% of the population was removed, coyote numbers rebounded back to pre-removal levels in a mere 8 months (E. Gese, 2005).

BETTER SOLUTIONS: Most problematic coyote behavior can be changed, long-term, by removing food attractants, hazing coyotes who have become too human-habituated or bold, using appropriate dog fencing, and not allowing pets to free-roam/ be unsupervised.

CONCERNS WITH COLLARUM NECK SNARE:

NON-SELECTIVE: These snarers have a mouth-activated, pull-back mechanism which is designed to capture canines. Yet these snarers cannot distinguish between a dog and a coyote. Domestic dogs are certainly at risk of being ensnared where these devices are used, and in fact Collarum snarers are marketed to catch dogs as well. (see <http://www.collarum.com/parts.htm>)

HUMANE ISSUES: The Collarum website (collarum.com) states that in a study, "70% of the coyotes caught showed no significant damage." But what about the other 30%? How badly were they injured? And what is considered a "significant" injury? This could potentially include

common injuries seen in snaring and trapping including lacerations in skin, injuries to tendons and muscles, and broken teeth. The mouth-activated nature of this device raises the spectre of mouth and muzzle injuries, which could be life threatening. This same website stated that “most dogs and foxes sustain substantially less damage because they fight less than coyotes” – however a panicked or high-strung dog could seriously injure himself, and a thick-necked breed could have less or no slack in the noose.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,



Annie Hornish

Connecticut State Director

The Humane Society of the United States

Cell: (860) 966-5201

Email: ahornish@humanesociety.org