

Testimony in SUPPORT of AAC the Ban on Gestation Crates: HB 5416 (section 2); in OPPOSITION to section 1 of HB 5416 (creation of an “advisory council”)

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Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Connecticut legislators have the opportunity this year to ban one of the most horrific forms of animal cruelty—gestation crates. These are tiny cages used by the industrial pork farms to confine pigs used for breeding. They are 2 ft by 7 ft barren cages that are so small that pigs cannot even turn around. If we were to confine our pets in this manner, we would be guilty of animal abuse! Scientific research has shown that pigs are extremely intelligent, so it’s no wonder that sows confined in these crates quickly go insane from frustration and loneliness.

Polls clearly indicate that Connecticut voters do not want gestation crates to be legal in our state. A statewide survey by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research showed an astounding 91% of Connecticut voters want to ban these. The proposal of creating a huge "advisory council" is not the answer. It would simply add *another* level of bureaucracy that would more than likely block meaningful legislation to help farm animals. It is noteworthy that this “advisory council” tactic is being used by factory farming interests in other states.

To date, nine US states and the European Union have passed legislation to ban gestation crates. Smithfield Foods and Hormel have announced that they will end confinement of pigs in their company-owned facilities. Even McDonald’s and Burger King have announced that they will end the use of gestation crates in their supply chain.

We need to support local Connecticut farmers who farm humanely. The only way to accomplish this is to legislate a ban on this egregious relic of the industrial factory farming system.

No gestation crates in CT!