

New Jersey Vets Call for End to Gestation Crates

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US - One hundred New Jersey veterinarians have joined the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA) in calling for an end to the use of gestation crates.

Veterinarians from throughout the state signed on to a letter expressing support for the New Jersey Assembly Bill 3250, which would require that breeding pigs have enough space to turn around freely, lie down, stand up and fully extend their limbs. Assemblyman Gilbert "Whip" L. Wilson, D-Camden and Gloucester, and Assemblywoman Marlene Caride, D-Bergen and Passaic, introduced the bill. A Senate version of the bill, which was introduced by Sen. Raymond Lesniak, passed the Senate by an overwhelming majority of 35-1 this past summer.

"As unflinching advocates for animal health and welfare, we strongly agree with the central premise of this bill, that gestation crate confinement of breeding pigs should be banned because of the inhumane treatment involved," said Dr. Gordon Stull, a veterinarian from Galloway, New Jersey, and a member of the HSVMA Leadership Council. "Not only are we disturbed by the physical suffering that pigs confined in these crates endure, we are equally concerned with the psychological suffering that results from isolating intelligent, social animals from each other and from an inability to engage in most natural behaviors."

In the pork industry, most breeding pigs are confined day and night in gestation crates during their four-month pregnancy. These cages are roughly the same size as the animals' bodies and designed to prevent them from even turning around. The animals are subsequently transferred into another crate to give birth, re-impregnated, and put back into a gestation crate. This happens pregnancy after pregnancy for their entire lives, adding up to years of virtual immobilization. This confinement system has come under fire not only from veterinarians but also farmers, animal welfare advocates, animal scientists, consumers and others.

Those who have signed the A.3250 support letter include veterinarians who work in animal shelters and private practices and those from rural and urban communities throughout the state. The bill has passed the New Jersey Senate 35-1 and now awaits consideration by the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

The HSVMA support letter with veterinary signatures can be viewed on the HSVMA [website](#).

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