



**2026**

## **LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AND BILLS**



**THE LEAGUE  
OF  
HUMANE VOTERS®  
OF NEW YORK**

**POLITICAL ACTION FOR ANIMALS**

The League of Humane Voters® of New York  
Cell Phone: 914-388-5221 email: [annemuller@lohvny.org](mailto:annemuller@lohvny.org)

## THE LEAGUE OF HUMANE VOTERS



# 2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AND BILLS

## INTRODUCTION

The Mission of the League of Humane Voters® is to create, unite, and strengthen local political action committees, which work to enact animal-friendly legislation and elect candidates for public office who will use their votes and influence for animal protection. LOHV® works for animal protection by:

- Lobbying for animal-friendly legislation;
- Campaigning for candidates who support animal protection;
- Being a strong political voice for all animals – domestic, wildlife, farm, and animals who suffer from abuse and exploitation;
- Demonstrating that animal advocates are a substantial voting bloc.

## THE LOHV DELIVERS THE VOTE

The LOHV® recognizes that animal protection requires laws and enforcement. Animal exploitation is a political issue and not just a moral one. Our goal is to make animal protection a mainstream political issue by building support among citizens, activists, political parties, and elected representatives.

Those who hold elective office can pass laws to protect animals. LOHV® endorses candidates and then campaigns for their election to public office. We help to get out the vote for our candidates. Once in office, we lobby office holders to enact animal protective legislation.

LOHV® is strictly non-partisan.

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# TETHERING ACT

## An act to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to the tethering of dogs.

<b>A165 Assembly Member Rosenthal L.</b>	<b>S6380 Senator Brisport</b>
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Jackson, Stern, Glick, Davila, Kelles, Simone, Bores, Stirpe, Gallagher, McDonald, Tapia, Kay, McDonough, McMahon, Simon	
<b>REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, A/M Lupardo, Chair</b>	<b>REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, Senator Hinchey, Chair</b>



### BACKGROUND:

- Tethering is a high-risk factor in dog bites and attacks.
- Victims of such attacks are often children who approach the dog unaware of the risks.
- Tethered dogs' collars frequently become embedded in their skin causing infection and severe pain. They are at high risk of entanglement, strangulation and attacks by other dogs or people.
- Tethered dogs are often left without sufficient food and water when bowls are overturned, out of reach, or their water is frozen.
- Owners who chain their dogs are less likely to clean the area of confinement and less likely to provide adequate veterinary care.
- Tethered dogs often have no access to shelter from extreme heat and cold, snow, rain, and storms. Inadequate shelter is not waterproof -- providing little heat and protection, but law enforcement can unfortunately allow the owner to keep their pet in these conditions.

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL (LOHV NY PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ARE HIGHLIGHTED):

- This bill ensures that companion animals are tethered safely and humanely.
- No dog shall be tethered outdoors between the hours of 10 P.M. and 6 A.M.
- A dog shall not be tethered outside for longer than four (4) consecutive hours or a total time outside in excess of six (6) hours in a 24-hour period.
- The dog must not be tethered outdoors when a weather advisory or warning is issued by local, state or federal authorities or when outdoor environmental conditions, including, but not limited to heat, cold, wind, rain, snow or hail pose an adverse risk to the health or safety of such dog based on such dog's breed, age or physical condition.
- Tethered dogs must have unencumbered access to shade, food, water, shelter, and dry ground without becoming entangled. No dog shall be tethered to a vacant property or any tethering that could lead to the distress, serious discomfort, injury, or death of the dog.
- The structure shall include a heavy plastic or rubber flap to cover the door and/or window openings during the months of November through March. From April through October, the structure shall either be shaded or moved out of direct sunlight. If the shelter is made of wood, it shall be raised at least two inches off the ground to prevent seepage or rotting. Examples of inadequate shelter include, but are not limited to, lean-tos, metal or plastic drums, boxes, abandoned vehicles, porches, decks, or material that does not provide sufficient protection from the elements.
- Dogs cannot be tethered in temperatures under 40F degrees or over 85F degrees.

## AN ACT TO PROHIBIT A PERSON CONVICTED OF “BUSTER’S LAW” FROM OWNING POSSESSING A COMPANION ANIMAL UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY A COURT

<b><a href="#">A664</a> Assembly Member Rosenthal</b>	<b><a href="#">S1044</a> Senator Tedisco</b>
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> COLTON	<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> ASHBY, FELDER, MATTERA, O'MARA
<b>REFERRED TO:</b> AGRICULTURE, A/M Lupardo, Chair	<b>REFERRED TO:</b> AGRICULTURE, Senator Hinchey, Chair



Photo Credit: Jonas Vincent/Unsplash



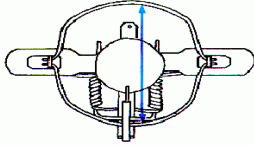
Photo Credit: Alvan Nee/Unsplash

### SUMMARY OF BILL:

- Prohibits a person convicted of "Buster's Law" from owning or possessing a companion animal unless authorized by court order, after appropriate psychiatric or psychological testing.
- AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to limiting the ownership or possession of companion animals by persons convicted of violating "Buster's Law".
- No person who is convicted of a violation of this section shall own or possess a companion animal unless and until authorized by a court order issued by a county court judge of such convicted person's county of residence.
- No such order shall be issued until such convicted person first demonstrates to the court that such convicted person has undergone psychiatric or psychological testing, the results of which indicate by clear and convincing evidence of such convicted person's capability and sound mental capacity and ability to own and properly care for such an animal in a humane manner.

## PROHIBITS LEG-GRIPPING TRAPS

<b>A667 Assembly Member Rosenthal L.</b>	<b>S1182 Senator Addabbo</b>
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Dinowitz, Stern, Gonzalez-Rojas, Epstein, Davila, Kelles, Shimsky, Simone, Bores <b>Multi-Sponsors:</b> Levenberg, Simon	<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Brisport, Skoufis
<b>REFERRED TO: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, A/M Glick, Chair</b>	<b>REFERRED TO: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, Senator Harckham, Chair</b>



### RACKUS, THE POSTER-BOY FOR WHY LEGHOLD TRAPPING MUST STOP!

Rackus used to visit Marilyn M. for his occasional treat of fruit. One day, he arrived without his right hand that he used to pick up his piece of cantaloupe or honeydew, which he relished.

Several months later, he arrived without his left hand. Fortunately, Marilyn was able to get this photo as, sadly, it was the last time Rackus visited.

Raccoons' hands are to them what our eyes are to us. You'll learn many facts about raccoons' dependence on their hands at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2KaLgR5n>



### BACKGROUND:

- From: *JAWS OF STEEL* by Thomas Eveland, a former trapper whose trap killed Haskel: *He, nor any other forest creature, could not have suspected what happened next. The leg-hold trap snapped shut on his right front leg at about mid-calf. The young raccoon threw his furry frame backwards out of pure instinct and squealed from both pain and shock. But it was too late. His fate was sealed. Haskel flailed wildly for countless minutes, stretching the chain to its four-foot length, then biting at the steel jaws that held him. At one point he bit down so hard on the steel that three of his teeth broke, one of them a large front canine. The right front leg was not really injured from the trap, but it pinched sharply. Piercing waves of pain, though, shot through his jaw from his broken teeth. Thirty minutes or so after the initial strike, Haskel sat exhausted. He had torn chunks of bark from the exposed tree roots, thrown most of the leaves from the capture area and tried dozens of times to break the chain. His squeals, grunts and snarls had faded into the blackness around him. The steel jaws had cut deeply into his calf muscle from his thrashing and his large Achilles tendon was now severed. He sat quietly now, panting and confused. An hour after it all began, Haskel's jaw was still stinging smartly, but the pain in his leg was gone. With the circulation cut off; his lower leg below the trap had become numb. He was tired and thirsty, but he could not reach the water's edge. When he stretched the chain to its maximum, he was only inches short of the brook.* (<https://www.amazon.com/Jaws-Steel-Thomas-Eveland/dp/0963076604>)
- Wildlife trapping is an activity licensed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The state license allows individuals to trap furbearing animals, such as beavers, raccoons, foxes and coyotes to produce fur products. Despite the availability of more humane alternatives, such as box or cage traps, many trappers still use steel leg-gripping traps, also known as foothold traps. These traps are triggered by springs once an animal steps onto the trap, quickly clamping onto their limb and holding them in place until they are discovered by the trapper. In some regions of New York State, it may be up to 48 hours before a trapper checks on a trap.
- Animals caught in leg-gripping traps are immobilized, and therefore are unable to move, eat or drink, care for their young or defend themselves from predators. In some cases, animals have even been discovered chewing off their trapped limbs in order to escape. The American Veterinary Medical Association is opposed to their use. Species other than the target species are frequently trapped, including domestic animals.

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- No person shall (a) set or use a trap of the leg-gripping type; (b) set a trap so that wildlife when caught is suspended; (c) use, locate or set a snare or a device consisting of a noose of any material whereby an animal may be taken.

## BIG FIVE AFRICAN TROPHIES ACT

An act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to enacting the "Big Five African Trophies Act" relating to foreign game.

<b>A1616</b> Assembly Member Rosenthal L.	<b>S5014</b> Senator Sepulveda
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Simon, Burke, Gonzalez-Rojas, Levenberg, Stern, Kelles, Davila, Epstein, Simone, Bores	<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Addabbo, Brisport, Comrie, Harckham, Martinez, May, Serrano, Webb
<b>REFERRED TO:</b> ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, A/M Glick, Chair	<b>REFERRED TO:</b> ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, Senator Harckham, Chair



### BACKGROUND:

- The continued importation, possession, sale and/or transportation of the so-called "Big Five African Species" - lions, leopards, elephants, giraffes, black rhinos and white rhinos-is detrimental to the survival of these species.
- All of the Big Five African Species are threatened with extinction if the current rate of illegal poaching continues. Additionally, some African countries are considering (or have already) legalizing sport hunting and exportation of Big Five African Species. Such countries have based the legalization on the faulty logic that legalizing hunting of Big Five African Species will decrease the illegal poaching and trade of these animals. Such logic is not only erroneous, but also detrimental to the survival of the Big Five African Species.
- There is growing scientific evidence that legal trade of trophy-hunted species preserves and reinforces the illegal sourcing of the same. For example, South Africa, home to the second largest black rhino population in the world, received permission by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora to sell permits for trophy-hunted rhinos in 2004. Many of these hunts are purchased by Americans, and the trophies are imported into or through the state of New York. The country has since seen a marked rise in illegal rhino poaching, with the World Wildlife Fund reporting that rhino poaching has increased 5,000% since 2007.
- Accordingly, by banning the importation, possession, sale and transportation of all Big Five African Species within New York, the State will not be encouraging or abetting the continued demise of these species by sport-hunting. Only a complete ban can stem the tide of illegal trafficking caused by the legalization of hunting and capture of the Big Five African Species in some African countries.

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no individual, firm, corporation, association, or partnership shall import, export, transport, process, sell, offer for sale, purchase, trade, barter, distribute or possess any part or product of the skin or body, whether raw or manufactured, of the following animal species: African Elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*); African Leopard (*Panthera Pardus*); African Lion (*Panthera Leo*); Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros Bicornis*); White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium Simum*); and African Giraffe (*Giraffa Camelopardalis*).

## LIVE ANIMAL MARKET BAN

An act to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to prohibiting the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered and butchered for food.

<a href="#">A2421</a> Assembly Member Rosenthal L.	<a href="#">S5017</a> Senator Sepulveda
Co-Sponsors: Dinowitz, Epstein, Hevesi, Jackson, Stern, Glick, Simone, Bores, Kelles, Davila	Co-Sponsors: Brisport, Harckham, Hoylman-Sigal, Mayer, Webb
REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, A/M Lupardo, Chair	REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, Senator Hinchey, Chair



Animals are kept in close, dirty, inhumane living quarters where they are then slaughtered in sometimes unsterile ways.

### BACKGROUND:

- Live markets are cruel because the animals are kept in cramped, overcrowded and squalid living quarters. They are often sick and injured and are not fed or given water. The species sold in these markets typically include chickens, ducks, turkey and other fowl, as well as mammals such as rabbits, goats, sheep and cows.
- Despite being issued a litany of violations in New York City, these markets still operate in deplorable conditions and continue to present health risks to the surrounding residential and retail communities because of unsanitary conditions, disposal issues and the poor air quality they generate which contribute to asthma and respiratory diseases. They also pose a health hazard to the customers who buy their food there.
- In November 2022 avian influenza was found in a live market in Queens, resulting in the killing of 170 birds. In 2023 avian flu was found in two live markets in Brooklyn. In February 2025 seven cases of avian flu were found in markets in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens resulting in a temporary shutdown of all markets in New York City, Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk counties. These outbreaks have not stopped and were reported again in markets in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, as well as in Onondaga County. The most current finding was this February.
- Many zoonotic diseases, which originate in animals and are then transmitted to humans, such as SARS, H5N1 and Covid-19 have their origins in live animal markets.
- As reported in the NYT in January: "The commingling of people and various species at live animal markets – including in New York City - offers countless opportunities for viruses to swap mutations and gain new abilities".
- We are less prepared for an outbreak now as the Trump administration dismantled biosecurity work at the CDC, gutted the WHO of pandemic preparedness, and cut support for the surveillance of pandemic threats in the U.S. and abroad. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy has called the stockpiled shots of H5N1 "dangerous" and cancelled nearly \$600 million in contracts to develop a bird flu vaccine using mRNA.
- This bill would eliminate one major source of such deadly outbreaks and other diseases, improve the quality of life for those living and working near these markets, and put an end to the suffering the animals in these markets endure.
- Bill A2421/S5017 will prohibit the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered or butchered for food; establishes a task force on public health risks and animal welfare concerns of slaughterhouses.

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- The purpose of this law is to eliminate one potential vector for the transmission of zoonotic diseases, live animal markets, and the suffering it causes there from at least until there is further examination by infectious disease experts of the nexus between zoonotic diseases and live animal markets.
- Prohibition of the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered for food.
- A task force on public health risks and animal welfare concerns of slaughterhouses is hereby established. Such task force shall conduct and complete a thorough examination of facilities heretofore licensed by the department under this article and their effect on public health and safety and animal welfare.
- Such task force shall make a report of its findings to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly within one year of the date of the first meeting of the task force, which shall take place within thirty days of the appointment of the task force representatives.
- Such report shall include recommendations for further action and legislation.
- Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to any facilities other than live poultry or small animal slaughterhouses pursuant to this article which are open to the public.

## PROHIBITS CERTAIN ANIMALS IN TRAVELING ACTS

### An act to prohibit the participation of certain animals in traveling acts.

<b><a href="#">A5850</a> Assembly Member Deborah Glick</b>	<b><a href="#">S3629A</a> Senator Nathalia Fernandez</b>
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Bores, Simone, Lee, Colton, Burdick, Rosenthal, Epstein, Gonzalez-Rojas, Dinowitz, Simon, Steck, Davila, Shimsky, McDonough, Paulin, Kay, Romero, Lasher, Levenberg, Kelles, Otis, Stirpe, Hevesi, Lunsford, Cruz, Seawright, Reyes, Kassay	<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> GIANARIS, KAVANAGH, MARTINEZ, SKOUFIS, WEBB
<b>REFERRED TO: CODES, A/M Dinowitz, Chair</b>	<b>ADVANCED TO THIRD READING</b>

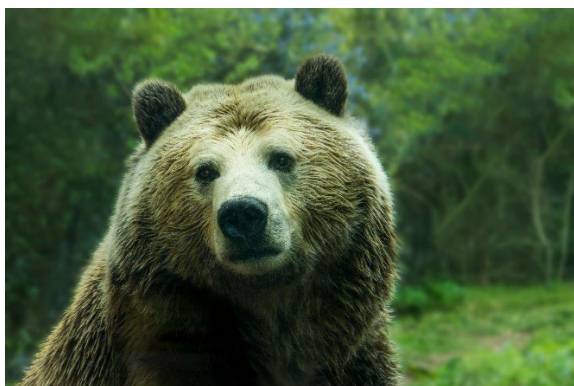


Photo credit: Jessica Wieller/Unsplash



Photo credit: [Ondrej Machart/Unsplash](#)

#### BACKGROUND:

- Traveling wildlife acts bring the public into dangerous proximity to powerful and unpredictable wild animals. Animal trainers have been attacked, and sometimes killed, in front of audiences.
- While certain federal laws promise humane treatment of circus animals, these laws have traditionally gone unenforced and have been difficult to sanction in court due to issues of legal standing.
- In 2017, New York State enacted legislation prohibiting the use of elephants in entertainment acts, including circuses, carnivals, parades, or trade shows. In 2014, New York prohibited human contact with tigers, lions, or any other big cats. Additionally, NYSDEC issued permits prohibit public contact with endangered or threatened wildlife at fairs and circuses. By population, more than half the state already prohibits wild animals in traveling shows, including New York City, Suffolk County, Westchester County, East Hampton, Southampton, Greenburgh, Walkill, and Ulysses.
- The traveling act environment is far removed from a wild animal's natural habitat. As the public becomes more aware of the need to protect endangered and threatened species, the presence of such animals in these acts has become difficult to justify. This bill would prohibit the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation from issuing permits or licenses that would authorize non-human primates, bears, kangaroos, wallabies, and cats to appear, in traveling acts. This bill in no way prevents or restricts the showing of agricultural or domestic animals.

#### SUMMARY OF BILL:

- AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting the participation of certain animals in traveling animal acts.
- Prohibits the participation of certain animals in traveling animal acts; prohibits the department of environmental conservation from issuing permits or licenses allowing participation of certain animals in traveling animal acts; excludes certain permanent performing institutions; imposes a civil penalty not to exceed \$1000 for a violation.
- Section one prohibits the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) from issuing permits or licenses that would authorize the exhibition of covered animals in traveling acts. Covered animals are cats that are not domestic cats, kangaroos, wallabies, bears, and non-human primates.
- This bill would prohibit the New York Department of Environmental Conservation from issuing permits or licenses to entities seeking to place wild animals on display in any setting other than a zoo, aquarium, or wildlife sanctuary.

## EXCLUDE CERTAIN AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES FROM THE DEFINITION OF SMALL GAME

<b>A6581A Assembly Member Woerner</b>	<b>S8693 Senator Salazar</b>
<b>Co-Sponsors:</b> Burdick, Bores, Davila, Manktelow, Smullen, Miller	<b>Co-Sponsors:</b>
<b>REFERRED TO: ORDERED TO THIRD READING</b>	<b>REFERRED TO: ENVIRONMENTAL CONVERSATION, Senator Harckham, Chair</b>



### BACKGROUND:

- We are experiencing a global extinction crisis driven by climate change, habitat destruction, and pollution. Amphibians and reptiles are among the most endangered animal species on the planet. 40% of amphibians worldwide are threatened with extinction. 60% of the world's turtles are threatened or already extinct.
- There are two amphibians and ten reptiles currently listed as threatened or endangered in New York, with an additional ten species on the special concern list. New York does not have a baseline inventory of populations of native frogs, toads, salamanders, newts, snakes, lizards or turtles so we do not know the extent of the decline in our state over the last decades. Anecdotally, it is high. The DEC Atlas project has attempted to map distributions of our amphibians and reptiles and is currently using volunteers to collect more data on these animals, but many local populations are already in severe decline or extirpated.
- Given the extreme threat to these sensitive creatures, it is common sense to prohibit a further reduction in their populations due to hunting. This bill would remove certain amphibians and reptiles from the list of animals that can be taken as small game in our state. The bill will not affect nuisance permits or the rights of farmers to take certain animals on their own farmland.

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- This bill removes native amphibians and reptiles from the list of small game that can be taken with a hunting or fishing license in New York with the exception of bullfrogs and snapping turtles.
- It removes native frogs, excluding bullfrogs, from the list of animals that may be hunted by longbow, gun, raptors, spearing, catching with hands, or by use of a club or hook, and allows DEC to determine the manner of taking for bullfrogs.
- It amends the definition of "protected wildlife" and adds a new definition of "wild reptiles" and "wild amphibians."

## REVISION TO FARM ANIMAL SHELTER LAWS

### Overdriving, torturing and injuring animals; failure to provide proper sustenance.

<b>A. TBD - Assembly Member Bores</b>	<b>S. TBD - Senator Addabbo</b>
Co-Sponsors:	Co-Sponsors:
<b>REFERRED TO: Agriculture and Markets</b>	<b>REFERRED TO: Agriculture and Markets</b>



Agriculture and Markets Law, Article 26, section 353 currently states the following:

353. Overdriving, torturing and injuring animals; failure to provide proper sustenance.

A person who overdrives, overloads, tortures or cruelly beats or unjustifiably injures, maims, mutilates or kills any animal, whether wild or tame, and whether belonging to himself or to another, or deprives any animal of necessary sustenance, food or drink, or neglects or refuses to furnish it such sustenance or drink, or causes, procures or permits any animal to be overdriven, overloaded, tortured, cruelly beaten, or unjustifiably injured, maimed, mutilated or killed, or to be deprived of necessary food or drink, or who willfully sets on foot, instigates, engages in, or in any way furthers any act of cruelty to any animal, or any act tending to produce such cruelty, is guilty of a class A misdemeanor and for purposes of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section 160.10 of the criminal procedure law, shall be treated as a misdemeanor defined in the penal law.

The proposed revision would add **SHELTER** AS IT IS IN OTHER STATES SUCH AS IOWA, VERMONT, VIRGINIA AND WASHINGTON?

This bill would amend Art. 26, Sec. 353 to include depriving "SHELTER" as an act of cruelty to any animal, or any act tending to produce such cruelty,

A person who overdrives, overloads, tortures, or cruelly beats or unjustifiably injures, maims, mutilates or kills any animal, whether wild or tame, and whether belonging to himself or to another, or deprives any animal of necessary sustenance, food, drink **or shelter** or neglects or refuses to furnish it such sustenance or drink or causes, procures or permits any animal to be overdriven, overloaded, tortured, cruelly beaten, or unjustifiably injured, maimed, mutilated or killed, or to be deprived of necessary food, drink or shelter or who willfully sets on foot, instigates, engages in, or in any way furthers any act of cruelty to any animal, or any act tending to produce such cruelty, is guilty of a class A misdemeanor and for purposes of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section 160.10 of the criminal procedure law, shall be treated as a misdemeanor of the criminal procedure law, shall be treated as a misdemeanor defined in the penal law.

**Shelter** in Agriculture and Markets law Article 26 Section 350 could be defined as follows:

**Shelter for animals (excluding companion animals) shall be reasonably sufficient to provide adequate protection from the elements and weather conditions suitable for the age and species of the animals so as to maintain the animal in a good state of health. The shelter must protect the animal from sun, rain, snow, sleet or any inclement weather and be made from non-porous, water resistant, nontoxic, and able to withstand regular cleaning and disinfections. The shelter must provide sanitary conditions free from excess animal waste and excess mud and water build up and must have at least three sides and be sturdy so as to not fall over or blow away. The shelter must also include adequate bedding.**

**THE LEAGUE OF HUMANE VOTERS**



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