

GOVERNOR CUOMO SIGNS ANIMAL FIGHTING BILL AND ANOTHER BILL TO DISCOURAGE BEAR POACHING

Governor Cuomo signed S3237-A into law on August 3. This measure is intended to strengthen law enforcement's ability to crack down on spectators at animal fights. Although the new law isn't as strong as we would have preferred, it is a step in the right direction. The new law enables police to charge an individual who knowingly attends an animal fight with a misdemeanor carrying a penalty of up to 3 months in jail and a fine of up to \$500. A subsequent conviction within five years would entail a stronger misdemeanor penalty of up to a year in jail and a fine not to exceed \$1,000.

Later in August, the governor signed a second bill supported by animal advocates. S3858-B, which restricts the sale, purchase, or possession of bear gall bladders or bile. New York until now was one of the few states that did not have similar or stronger restrictions on a practice that encourages the killing of bears, often outside the legal hunting season, strictly for body parts sold for certain Asian medicinal purposes.

Please thank Governor Cuomo for approving these bills. His office can be reached at www.governor.ny.gov. Then, press "Contact." Phone: 518-474-8390