



GEARING UP FOR 2021: NOT YOUR TYPICAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

CVA Legislative Priorities -- Let's Finish What We Started Last Year

Like so much else around the world, the 2020 session of the CT General Assembly was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in little to no action on our legislative initiatives. Next year's "long session" – running from January 6 to June 9 – will not be typical either. To keep everyone safe, it will be mostly virtual.



In developing our strategy for 2021, CVA looked to renew many of those incomplete proposals. The following are CVA's legislative priorities for 2021:

- **Oppose bear hunting in CT:** CVA will again partner with animal advocacy and environmental groups to defeat any efforts to authorize a bear hunt in the state. No bill has yet been identified, but we will be ever vigilant to block any anticipated measures.
- **Local control of pet shops:** Legislation to clarify that local jurisdictions have authority over whether to allow the sale of puppy mill dogs, cats, and rabbits in their local pet shops.
- **Circus bill:** Legislation to stop the use of exotic and wild animals in circuses and other live entertainment. CVA is supporting animal advocates' efforts to reintroduce last year's bill (SB-413), which was raised by the Environment Committee in 2020.
- **Eliminate the sale of fur products in CT:** CVA is working with Fur Free CT to build interest in a movement to stop the sale of new fur products in the state.



Additionally, CVA will support several bills introduced by others. They include proposals to stop the trade and sale of shark fins, prohibit the use of animal fighting paraphernalia and prohibit the import, sale, and possession of African elephants, lions, leopards, black rhinoceros, white rhinoceros, and giraffes (2020-HB 5104).

How to Advocate During a Pandemic



This will be a difficult year to get the attention of legislators. So now, more than ever, you will play a vital role in *Speaking Up for Animals*. The Capitol will remain closed to the public and committee hearings will be held via Zoom. The public can follow the proceedings on YouTube. That means CVA – and every other interest group – will have to work even harder to get their positions before committees and individual legislators. Leaders have advised committees to limit the number of bills

reported out; highly controversial issues are less apt to get time on the floor.

Lawmakers, meanwhile, are likely to have more demands on their time. While virtual meetings may mean greater availability and access, legislators will also receive more requests than usual to meet virtually. Don't give up! Your efforts are vital in getting through. Legislators can turn a blind eye to lobbyists or organizations with which they have no connection, but it's improbable they will say "no" to their constituents.

Below are some tips for effective advocacy on behalf of CT's animals:

1. **Reach out to your state senator and representative**. It's easy to send an email letting them know you live in their district, support CVA, and care about issues concerning animals. Mention any bill or issue you are especially interested in. You can [find your legislator](#) on the CVA website.
2. **Watch for CVA Alerts**. This is how we let you know when there is a pressing issue on potential legislation which requires a call or email to your legislator. These Alerts are typically important and time-sensitive.
3. **Share CVA posts on social media**. The more people we can reach on an issue, the greater chance of success in Speaking Up for Animals. Encourage your friends to support CVA and [sign up](#) on the CVA website and spreading the word on their own social media.

Get to Know CT's Newest Legislators

The CT General Assembly will welcome three new state senators and 22 new state representatives in the upcoming 2021 session; one of them might represent your House or Senate district. Check the [CVA website](#) to find out, and if so, please reach out to him or her. Consider sending a note of congratulations or scheduling an introductory meeting to let the new members get to know you – and CVA. Ask them to support our 2021 legislative priorities (see story above) and enact stronger laws protecting animals in our state.

Speak Up For Animals!



HELP US HELP THE ANIMALS!

Don't Forget Your End-Of-Year Donation to CVA



At CVA, we depend on financial contributions from animal supporters like you to continue our mission of educating and engaging the public to advocate for laws that protect animals in CT. CVA is fortunate once again to receive \$20,000 from an anonymous donor as an incentive to raise an equal amount by December 31. We hope you can help us meet this challenge.

As you know, CVA's funding comes from personal contributions of caring people like you. Please give as generously as you can. Consider making a recurring monthly donation, which can be done securely on our website. Together, and with your generous support, we will move forward and *Speak Up for Animals*.

**Donate
Today!**

EDUCATION FOR ADVOCATES



Advocacy 101 Goes Virtual. Save the Date.

Your voice is essential in advancing our priorities during the 2021 legislative session. Legislators need to get the message directly from advocates like you in support of laws against bear hunting, puppy mills, circus animals, and fur sales, and *for* better laws to stop animal cruelty.

Advocacy Workshop

Sat., Jan. 30, 2021

**10 - 11:30 a.m.
and
12 - 2 p.m.**

Learn firsthand from state lawmakers how to make the most impact during CVA's second annual advocacy workshop – online on **Jan. 30**. Once again, CVA wants to thank the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut for partnering with us to offer this workshop.

Workshop topics include:

- an in-depth discussion of this session's key legislative issues
- strategies on how to lobby state lawmakers on behalf of animals
- a deep dive into how the CT General Assembly will operate during the pandemic
- breakout sessions on priority legislation

The workshop is free but registration is required. Watch for future emails with sign-up information.

**Learn How to Navigate the General Assembly
Website with CVA's New Video**

The CT General Assembly (CGA) website has a wealth of information for animal advocates, but it's not always easy to find what you're looking for. CVA's second educational video, [Navigating the CGA website](#), is here

to help. Hosted by CVA Executive Director Jo-Anne Basile, the video goes over the website's highlights and explains how to navigate it. The video will be released Dec. 18. CVA supporters will receive an email with a link to the video. It will also be available on our website and facebook page.



[Watch Now](#)

QUICK LINKS

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[Learn More About CT Animal Laws](#)

2021 CVA EVENTS

Jan. 6: Opening day of 2021 General Assembly

Jan. 30: CVA Advocacy Workshop; 10 - 12 a.m. and 12:30 -

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