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UNITED STATES SENATE

May 9, 2016

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Governor
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 451
Columbia, SC 29201-3740

Dear Governor Haley:

The attached letter concerns an issue outside my official jurisdiction. Therefore, as a courtesy to my constituent, I am sending this correspondence to your attention.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I ask that you please respond directly to the individual.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator

LOG/mp

Dear Lindsey Graham,

23 April 2016

Hello, my name is Lauren Bamford, I am 14 years old, and I live in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Before I tell you my purpose for writing this letter, I'd like to tell you a little about myself. I am originally from Atlanta, Georgia, but moved to Philadelphia 8 years ago. At the age of 6, I took in our family cat-Livia (who died two years ago) and became her owner. In 2009, I got my second cat- Myra. In 2013 Livia died of kidney failure and not long after, I received my third cat- Rascal. I have been horse riding since I was 5 years old and it a very big passion of mine. I also have two dogs and had several dogs in the past, but in August we adopted Henry who is a rescue dog from a Puppy Mill. I am very passionate about all animals and have done many actions to support them. A few months ago, I saved a chipmunk after a severe injury and brought it to a wildlife facility to get it the help it needed. Recently, I have written several letters to various U.S state governors saying that Puppy Mills should be illegal. As well as writing the same letter to President Obama. I also had many governors respond to me letters and one of the letters I sent to Maryland, was forwarded to the Maryland Department of Agriculture. I have been around animals of all kinds my whole, and I will always be every animals' voice.

Considering I love animals so much, I have my career all planned out. I want to work for the SPCA and become an animal cruelty investigator, as well as get my veterinary degree. For many months now, I have been watching the show: Houston Animal Cops-HSPCA. I am a sensitive person, especially when it involves animals' health & care. I recently read the book, *The Revenant*, and mentioned in the book was bear baiting, which caught my attention. After I finished the book, I researched everything about bear baiting and I have never been more disgusted about such an act. Before my research, I thought that dogs were put into a ring and were to be attacked by a black bear. But it turns out that it's the other way around, a captive black bear is being harassed and attacked by several dogs while being completely defenseless. How it works: a black bear that is held in captivity, will have ALL of its teeth extracted, claws removed, and is chained up. Few dogs out of many, are put into the ring to bark at the bear and potentially attack, bite, harm, or kill the black bear. It's a TRUE fact that ALL black bears are scared around humans, sensitive, and have defenseless behavior unless someone harms it. According to www.humansociety.org, "Black bears are shy animals who usually avoid humans whenever possible. When a black bear feels threatened or trapped, she will often bluff by charging forward and popping her jaws. The bear demonstrates fearful and defensive behavior, but not aggressive. In addition, HSUS investigators observed bears at baiting competitions being subjected to barking, biting dogs for hours on end without access to water, food, or shelter." What frustrates me the most, is that there are investigators examining the baitings, and all they see is no water, food, or shelter! It's ridiculous because investigators are supposed to investigate inhumane actions toward animals, and with bear baiting, they aren't doing their job! Black bears age also plays a part into the bear baiting competitions. According to www.humansociety.org, "Black bears can live nearly 40 years. If the practice of bear baiting continues, these bears could be forced to endure this cruelty for at least an additional 25

years." 25 years is almost half a life a bear would spend fighting to the death in such a cruel environment.


These vicious events are held and organized mainly breeders. "The known public bear baiting events in South Carolina are operated by breed clubs associated with the United Kennel Club and the American Kennel Club. These associations hold large or small annual events featuring bear baiting," said www.humansociety.org.

The environment of the black bears is not a suitable living space or proper veterinary care. According to www.humansociety.org, "The bears can be kept in extremely small cages without nutritionally appropriate foods. The DNR does not keep veterinary records for the bears or ensure that they are altered, although the agency stated it would not allow further breeding of captive bears. Inspections of the bears are very infrequent and cursory, and the DNR does not inspect the actual bear baiting events." What is shocking to me is that the DNR or the South Carolina ASPCA don't realize how big of an issue this act is. Bear baiting (in my opinion) is more serious, cruel, and disgusting than dog fighting. And for no one to look into it or consider investigating breaks my heart because I know these bears are helpless and the only person helping them is God.

"There are currently 26 captive bears in South Carolina, many likely used for bear baiting. The South Carolina issued permits for their possession, but has turned a blind eye to the cruelty they endure. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources does not inspect bear baiting competitions," said www.occupyforanimals.net?bear-baiting-in-south-carolina.html.

In conclusion, bear baiting /Baying SHOULD be illegal in the state of South Carolina because it is a form of animal cruelty that is invisible to the human eye. Can I tell you what I truly think about bear baiting? I see humans, but no humanity. Sure, you see humans organizing and breeding black bears, but there is no humanity because the bears are treated without respect and no one seems to care about a bloody animal battle. Instead, people abandon black bears in a cruel way that no one can open their eyes to see. When the Revenant, I surely thought that bear baiting would've been illegal because that was stated back in the 1800s before the Civil War. But unfortunately when I did research, I found that South Carolina is the only state in America that allows a cruel act such as bear baiting. I will push this animal cruelty case as far as to try to make bear baiting illegal before the year of 2017 because the longer we wait to make it illegal, the more the black bears have to suffer. Us humans are the voices of animals, and today.... I am that voice saying that Bear Baiting SHOULD be illegal because hope is stronger than fear, and as long as we have hope, we can save black bears.

Regards,

A large, fluid, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Lauren G. Bamford'.

Lauren G. Bamford

Bear Baiting Images

