

Cloris Leachman

February 22, 2012

The Honorable Rebecca D. Lockhart
Utah House of Representatives

Dear Representative Lockhart,

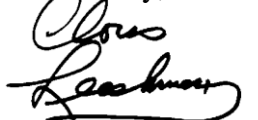
I was raised in the beef belt, and last year, I helped stop a bill in my home state of Iowa that aimed to criminalize the filming of animals on factory farms. I recently heard about another one of these peculiar bills, House Bill (H.B.) 187, that is currently making its way through Utah's legislature. The buzz is that this bill makes Utah's agriculture community appear desperate to hide inhumane and often illegal treatment of animals that has been documented across the country.

H.B. 187 seems to be a reaction to an animal-agriculture referendum in California a few years ago, which passed with overwhelming support from both conservatives and liberals. It sought to address increasing concerns about how animals are treated in the meat industry and establish more humane practices, rather than circumventing laws by forbidding cameras. I hope that Utah legislators recognize that with consumer demand for better treatment of animals, they must work to enforce and strengthen laws, not penalize those trying to expose cruel and illegal practices.

Citizens' right to document cruelty to animals—wherever it occurs—is crucial in helping local, state, and federal officials enforce anti-cruelty laws. PETA has worked hand in hand with law enforcement to prosecute animal abuse exposed by undercover investigations, which are often prompted by whistleblowers who work on factory farms or in slaughterhouses. Many of these investigations have resulted in the criminal prosecution and conviction of abusive managers and workers on cruelty-to-animals and similar charges. For example, in 2008 an undercover exposé of a factory farm in Iowa [found](#) that workers were beating pigs with metal rods, sexually abusing one pig with a cane, jabbing clothespins into pigs' eyes, and more. Because of this investigation, the sheriff charged six workers with 22 counts of livestock neglect and abuse—and all of them admitted guilt.

Won't you join me in opposing H.B. 187 so that police and prosecutors get the evidence they need to prosecute unlawful cruelty to animals? Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Cloris Leachman