



Source: Last Chance for Animals

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COVID-19 Is America's Wakeup Call to Stop Exploiting & Commodifying Animals

Statement from Chris DeRose, President & Founder of Last Chance for Animals on Zoonotic Disease and Stopping Agricultural Gag Laws

LOS ANGELES, April 06, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- "It has become apparent that COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease – one that originated with animals and transferred to humans, making this pandemic the most recent example of how the consumption, farming and capture of animals can work against humanity in ways we never imagined. Indeed, some of the worst epidemics in history were zoonotic in origin.

It's no secret that animals can sometimes carry harmful germs that can spread to people. These diseases are often the by-products of unnecessary animal industries, which can be rife with bad practices and risk-taking for the sake of profits. Wild animal markets, farmed and caged animals – especially ones kept in crowded pens and subjected to stress, unnatural nutrition and poor sanitation – are a breeding ground for zoonotic diseases. Despite the prevalence of COVID-19, these practices will continue unabated and in many cases, supported by governments around the world.

Here in the US, the dark irony is that many states have implemented or are actively attempting to pass [Ag Gag laws](#) that are designed to silence whistleblowers from reporting unsafe and unethical practices on factory farms. Under each state's ag-gag bill or law, animal cruelty, food safety, labor and environmental violations will go unreported and shielded from public scrutiny, thereby magnifying the risk of zoonotic disease and more.

These unconstitutional laws are aimed at preventing us and others from performing crucial investigative work to expose abuse and sanitary risks in animal industries such as factory farms, slaughterhouses and research labs. Nevertheless, [Last Chance for Animals](#) persists in our efforts to repeal or prevent these bills from being passed by urging officials to consider the human health risks posed by an animal agriculture system while also encouraging the public to reach out to their representatives to stop it.

Zoonotic diseases don't just spawn in Asia and Africa – they happen here in America. Most recently, we have suffered through EBOLA, SARS, MEARS, Mad Cow Disease and Swine Flu, all of which originated in animal hosts. Today we face COVID-19 and it's only a matter of time before another virus appears if

we don't demand the end of animal exploitation. Stopping the passage of Ag Gag laws, and continuing investigations exposing exploitive animal industries can help stop these diseases before they start. China, where COVID-19 originated, has only temporarily banned wild animal markets. The way to stop future zoonotic viruses is for global citizens to demand a stop to the exploitation and commodification of animals – for the animal's sake and their own health. Watch the video and join the fight at www.EndAgGagLaws.com.”

ABOUT LAST CHANCE FOR ANIMALS:

LCA is an international non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating animal exploitation through education, investigations, legislation, and public awareness campaigns. Since its formation in 1984, LCA has succeeded as one of the nation's pioneer animal advocacy groups. LCA's educational and public outreach programs have empowered the public to make positive changes for animals in their communities. For more information, visit <https://www.lcaanimal.org/>.

CONTACT: Kevin Mercuri
kevin@propheta.com

A video accompanying this press release is available at:
<https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/acdf6589-9901-4d92-84c1-06e10b180540>

Attachments:

- [Protecting animals ensures human health & wellbeing](#)