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State Legislators' Roll-Call Votes on Farm Animal Protection Bills: The Agricultural Connection



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Source: [Society & Animals](#), Volume 21, Issue 6, pages 501 – 522
Subjects: [Philosophy](#)
Publication Year : 2013
DOI: [10.1163/15685306-12341313](#)
ISSN: 1063-1119
E-ISSN: 1568-5306
[View subscription options](#)
Keywords: [farm animal welfare](#); [state legislatures](#); [animal activism](#); [agriculture](#)

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Abstract Nonhuman animal studies scholars have extensively investigated attitudes on animal welfare in general and farm animal welfare in particular. Thus far, this research has focused mainly on public opinion, but there has been minimal research seeking to explain the influences on actual policymakers when they vote on farm animal welfare legislation. This paper contributes to this literature by quantitatively analyzing 216 state legislators' votes on two farm animal welfare bills. It hypothesizes that the representatives' personal and representational connections with agriculture best explain their votes on these farm animal protection bills. This research also includes three control variables: each legislator's gender, race/ethnicity, and political party. Logistic regression revealed that the legislators' personal and representational connections with agriculture are significant, but political party is the strongest independent variable explaining state legislators' farm animal welfare votes. An interaction model revealed mixed evidence that political party moderates the influence of agriculture.

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