February 2015

Westminster Hall debate on BVA’s epetition to end non-stun slaughter: Lobbying briefing for BVA members

Background:

BVA is asking members to contact their MPs ahead of the Westminster Hall debate at 4.30pm on Monday 23 February 2015.

The debate is titled “Debate on an e-petition relating to ending non-stun slaughter to promote animal welfare” and will be led by Philip Hollobone MP (Conservative, Kettering). Mr Hollobone will open the debate and any MP is welcome to make interventions, ask questions, and speak in the debate. There is no vote but the relevant Minister (in this case, Defra) will attend to respond on behalf of the Government.

As time is of the essence we are asking members to contact their MPs by email or phone asap to ask their MP to attend the debate and to speak in favour of BVA’s position. The communication should be short and give the key points raised in the epetition (see below). The more contact we have with MPs’ offices the more they will recognise the strength of feeling on the issue.

Find your MP’s contact details:

Search by postcode, constituency name, or MP’s name: http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/

Please note that if your MP is a government minister or whip they will not attend the debate. However, it is still important to contact them to register your views and the strength of feeling.

Contacting your MP and key messages

On the next page you will find a draft outline/template for an email to your MP. The text should be in the body of the email rather than an attachment if possible to make sure it reaches your MP quickly and you must include your full address and postcode so that the MP can see that you are a constituent.

The same points outlined in the email template can be raised via a phone call to your MP’s office. In most cases you should expect to speak to a researcher/secretary rather than the MP and a message will be passed on.

Contact

For further information please contact the BVA Public Affairs Team as follows:

Will Little, Head of Media & Public Affairs, on 020 7908 6353 or williaml@bva.co.uk

Helena Cotton, Public Affairs Manager, on 020 7908 6342 or helenac@bva.co.uk
Email template

Subject: Westminster Hall debate on non-stun slaughter, 4.30pm Monday 23 February

Dear X

I am writing to ask you to attend the Westminster Hall debate “on an e-petition relating to ending non-stun slaughter to promote animal welfare” on Monday 23 February at 4.30pm to support the aims of the epetition.

[State that you are a veterinary surgeon and a member of the BVA and include a sentence or two about where you live and/or work/practise in the constituency]

Non-stun slaughter affects millions of animals every year. That is why I and my colleagues in the veterinary profession are campaigning for an end to non-stun slaughter or, at the very least, measures to reduce the amount of non-stun slaughter and to improve consumer choice through labelling.

I would like you to support the epetition in calling for:

- All animals, without exception, to be stunned before slaughter to render them insensible to pain
- Recognition that the scientific evidence shows that non-stun slaughter allows animals to perceive pain and therefore compromises welfare
- Clearer slaughter-method labelling (“stunned” or “non-stunned”) to allow consumers to make an informed choice if non-stun slaughter continues
- Labelling meat and meat products as “stunned” or “non-stunned” – it is not acceptable to label “halal” and “kosher” because well over 80% of halal slaughter is pre-stunned and the hindquarters of animals killed by the (non-stun) shechita method are not kosher and therefore not labelled
- Post-cut stunning, if non-stun slaughter continues, to reduce the welfare harm as much as possible

If you require more information my professional body, the British Veterinary Association, has produced a more detailed briefing for MPs which is available on the BVA website.

Please show your support for animal welfare and the views of the veterinary profession.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

[Include full contact details and address with postcode]