January 7, 2013

The Honorable Gilbert L. Wilson
New Jersey General Assembly
State House
Trenton, NJ 08625-0098

RE: Veterinary Support for A.3250

Dear Assemblymember Wilson:

I am writing on behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA), a national organization of approximately 4,500 veterinary professional members with a focus on the health and welfare of animals. We want to convey our strong support for your bill (A.3250) that would ban the extreme confinement of breeding sows in gestation crates. Joining with our association, 100 individual licensed New Jersey veterinarians have also signed the letter.

There is significant scientific evidence to support common-sense reform on this farm animal protection issue. Confining breeding sows in tiny crates causes them great suffering; it is an archaic practice that should now be ended.

Renowned animal welfare scientist Dr. Temple Grandin says, “Gestation crates are a real problem. Basically you’re asking a sow to live in an airline seat.” The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production—which was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, and included a former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture—recommended that “all systems that restrict natural movement,” including gestation crates, be phased out. Dr. Bernard Rollin of Colorado State University’s animal science department echoed the prevailing scientific viewpoint when he said: “Animals built to move must move.”

A better alternative to gestation crates is “group housing,” which provides resident animals with greater freedom of movement. Researchers at Iowa State University have found that “reproductive performance can be maintained or enhanced in well-managed group housing systems...without increasing labor.” They also concluded that
“group housing ... resulted in a weaned pig cost that was 11 percent less than the cost of a weaned pig from the individual stall confinement system.”

Establishing an animal cruelty offense for the inhumane confinement of gestating pigs is a reasonable common-sense reform. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and for introducing A.3250.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hodges, DVM, MBA
Veterinary Advisor
HSVMA Advocacy/Policy Division

Joined by the following 100 New Jersey veterinarians:

Dr. Donna Alfieri, East Hanover
Dr. Renee Alsarraf, Fairfield
Dr. Laura Acosta, Jersey City
Dr. Kimberly Ashford, Riverside
Dr. Jamie Ayres, Avenel
Dr. Lawrence Badalamenti, Montville
Dr. Laney Baris, Forked River
Dr. Sarah Barnes, Roseland
Dr. Jenna Beras, Woodbury Heights
Dr. Sue Bliesath, Long Valley
Dr. Neil Bloom, Avenel
Dr. Christopher Bukata, New Providence
Dr. Megan Campbell-Edelle, Flemington
Dr. Gabor Capodanno, Monmouth Junction
Dr. William V. Carter, Mercerville
Dr. Alexandra Castellanos-Figueroa, Avenel
Dr. Kristen Casulli, Flanders
Dr Aleda Cheng, Randolph
Dr. Philippe Coudrai, Sicklerville
Dr. David Croman, Hillside
Dr. Louis J. Crupi, Nutley
Dr. Julie D’Alessandro, Mullica Hill

Dr. Andrea Danforth, Secaucus
Dr. Edie DeMaria, Mahwah
Dr. Robert M. Diener, Whitehouse Station
Dr. Sandra M. Dudek, Newton
Dr. Kimberly Farina, Madison
Dr. Lauren Feldman, Belle Mead
Dr. Joseph P. Fenton, Howell
Dr. Anastasia Ferrante, Montville
Dr. Maria Fjerstad, Robbinsville
Dr. Andrea S. Freeman, Raritan
Dr. Joel R. Friedman, Avenel
Dr. Stuart Gutman, Long Valley
Dr. Laurie Heeb, Bloomfield
Dr. Laurel Himes, Bay Head
Dr. Elizabeth Hoekstra, Morristown
Dr. Erno L. Hollo, Basking Ridge
Dr. Diane Horn, Mt. Holly
Dr. Chris A. Hunt, Fairfield
Dr. Elizabeth Hunton, Lebanon
Dr. John Hynes, New Providence
Dr. Karen Johanson, Madison
Dr. Amber Karwacki, Basking Ridge
HSVMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Roberto Aguilar, DVM
Barnstable, MA
Gary Block, DVM, MS, DACVIM
East Greenwich, RI
Holly Hazard, JD, Secretary
Washington, DC
Paula Kislak, DVM, President
Santa Barbara, CA
Andrew Rowan, Ph.D.
Washington, DC

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
Richard Bachman, DVM
Vallejo, CA
Laureen Bartfield, DVM
New Hill, NC
Holly Cheever, DVM, Chair
 Voorheesville, NY
Nicholas Dodman, BVMS, MRCVS, DACVIM
Grafton, MA
Brad Evergreen, DVM
Monroe, WA
Brian Forsgren, DVM
Cleveland, OH
Brenda Forsythe, MS, PhD, DVM, CAAB
Guadalupe, CA
Madeline Graham, DVM
Los Angeles, CA
Annie Harvilicz, DVM, CVA
Santa Monica, CA
Barb Jones, DVM, MS
Davis, CA
Maya Key, CVT
Louisville, CO
Patricia N. Olson, DVM, PhD
Denver, CO
Larry Peetz, DVM
Portland, OR
Jennifer Scarlett, DVM
San Francisco, CA
Gordon B. Stull, VMD
Vincetown, NJ

Dr. Michelle Kazdin, Tinton Falls
Dr. Young D. Kim, Cherry Hill
Dr. Susanna Klayman, Clarksburg
Dr. Aimee Kompel, Tabernacle
Dr. Kristen Lane, Linwood
Dr. Wendy Leich, Oldwick
Dr. Steven Lewis, West Orange
Dr. Emily Levine, Roseland
Dr. Carmen Lorento, Neptune
Dr. Rebecca A. Lorig, Morris Plains
Dr. Andrew Major, Matawan
Dr. Robert L. Mankowski, Mt. Laurel
Dr. Ann Marcario, West Orange
Dr. Pamela M. Mark, Avenel
Dr. Lisa A. Mazzochi, Vineland
Dr. Howard Miller, West Orange
Dr. Julie Moberg, Ocean City
Dr. Robert Moreau, Bay Head
Dr. Sangha Mithra Nalluri, Matawan
Dr. Robin Naulty, Gillette
Dr. Kim Naumovich-Homan, Randolph
Dr. Steven Neuss, Wayne
Dr. Christine A. Newman, Belle Mead
Dr. Lori Nordt, Galloway
Dr. Mike Nuzzi, Atco
Dr. John P. Palescandolo, Fairfield
Dr. Patsy A. Picone, Audubon
Dr. Colleen Puelsch, Long Valley
Dr. Michael Ramieri, Vernon
Dr. Jessica Redin, Basking Ridge
Dr. Nancy K. Reilly, Seaville
Dr. Dina Rovere, Atlantic Highlands
Dr. Jill Sammarco, Tinton Falls
Dr. Miriam Samet, Yardville
Dr. Wende Saunders, Madison
Dr. Rosanna Scali, Howell
Dr. Marko Sima, Atlantic Highlands
Dr. Carolyn Slavin, Mt. Holly
Dr. Lois Sloan, Galloway
Dr. Leslie Smith, Avenel
Dr. Laura Snyder, Franklinville

Dr. Bernadette Spector, Woodbury Heights
Dr. Gregory Staller, Califon
Dr. Maria Stanik, Gibbstown
Dr. Scott Stekler, Glen Rock
Dr. Jim Stewart, Mercerville
Dr. Gordon Stull, Galloway
Dr. Rebeca Trejo, Voorhees
Dr. Alexia Tsakiris-Vasilopoulos, Fair Haven
Dr. Manohar Vanguru, Voorhees
Dr. Kelley Vex, Basking Ridge
Dr. Todd Wolf, Parsippany
Dr. Carolyn Wooley, Pennington
Dr. Richard Yacowitz, Little Silver
Dr. Michael Yurkus, Middletown
Dr. Patricia A. Zinna, Matawan