



## Michigan Agri-Business Association

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# MI Animal Producers, Humane Society Reach Critical Deal on Production Practices

*Legislature OKs bill; devastating showdown avoided*

EAST LANSING – Michigan’s egg and pork production industries **today** praised the Michigan Legislature for the passage of proactive legislation, negotiated between the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and these industries, to address certain production practices in their businesses.

“This legislation, though it will cause change in how eggs are produced and swine is handled, are the result of extensive negotiations between the industry and HSUS,” said **Jim Byrum**, President of the **Michigan Agri-Business Association**, which was also involved in the discussions. “No one likes change and no one likes to spend money to make those changes. The fact of the matter is that agriculture recognizes we must be more responsive to consumer demand and perceptions. This legislation is a manifestation of that realization.”

The legislation will ban the use of so-called battery cages in egg production and gestation stalls in the pork industry in a little more than 10 years, and the use of crates for veal production in three years.

“Producers will shoulder significant cost burden to make these changes,” **Byrum** continued.

The HSUS had threatened to collect signatures for a ballot initiative in Michigan that would have caused essentially these same outcomes, but in a much shorter time-frame and with much more onerous penalties against Michigan farmers.

The HSUS ran a similar campaign in California last year, and both sides spent in excess of \$19 million, and 63.5 percent voted in favor of the proposal.

“We believe that this is the best resolution to a difficult situation, and producers now have certainty, and can spend their resources to comply with the new guidelines. We also believe that this will place Michigan in a leadership role in regard to animal care in the nation, which end users and consumers will recognize, creating a market advantage for producers in our state,” said **Byrum**.

The legislation heads to the desk of Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who is expected to sign the bill.

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