

# Federal Protection Sought For People Who Use Animals

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use industry and "key" in ensuring the passage of the Animal Enterprise Protection Act of 1992.

On Monday, Lang and the Hershey Medical Center administration opened up the research center for use by Rep. Gekas and several representatives of agricultural and biomedical research support organizations, so they could hold a press conference to announce the introduction of a proposed amendment to the Animal Enterprise Protection Act.

Gekas told the group that a study by the Justice Department had indicated a growing trend in violent acts against the people who use animals, instead of the institutions.

"Animal rights terrorism is a growing underground movement which must be stopped," Gekas said. "My legislation is offered based on the findings of a September 1993 report issued by the Justice and Agriculture departments which documents this growing trend of personal victimization."

Although a copy of the report was not available by presstime, Gekas said it states, "the most disturbing pattern to emerge during the period in question was that individuals and their personal property were targeted with increasing frequency."

The six-term representative of the 17th District said the report also states, "all of the extremist acts that have been directed against individual researchers have involved either threats against their person or family members or vandalism to their personal property or both."

In an effort to curb such activity, Gekas has proposed addressing the problem by including wording that basically repeats the protections now afforded farms, livestock yards, zoos, and research facilities against terrorists, but specifically states that people involved in the operation of animal-use facilities are likewise protected.

Gekas said he was "confident" that his measure would serve as a "preventative and deterrent" to the personal attacks.

His measure is also supported

by Americans For Medical Progress Inc., an Arlington, Va.-based organization that supports the education of laypeople as to the truth about medical research and the use of animals.

It's president, Susan E. Paris, provided media with information packets that included a fact sheet that debunks animal rightist rhetoric.

In fact, according to Paris's data, "humans are used in medical research far more often than animals."

Among those who on Monday called attention to the agricultural benefit of the proposal and supported Gekas was Janet Carson, spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Farmers Association/Farm Bureau.

She and Kenneth Brandt, founder and representative of Pennsylvanians for Responsible Use of Animals (PRUA), and Brenda Shambaugh, lobbyist for the Pennsylvania State Grange, took turns making statements about their respective organization's support for the proposal.

Gekas said he has strong support for the measure and was optimistic that it would be passed.

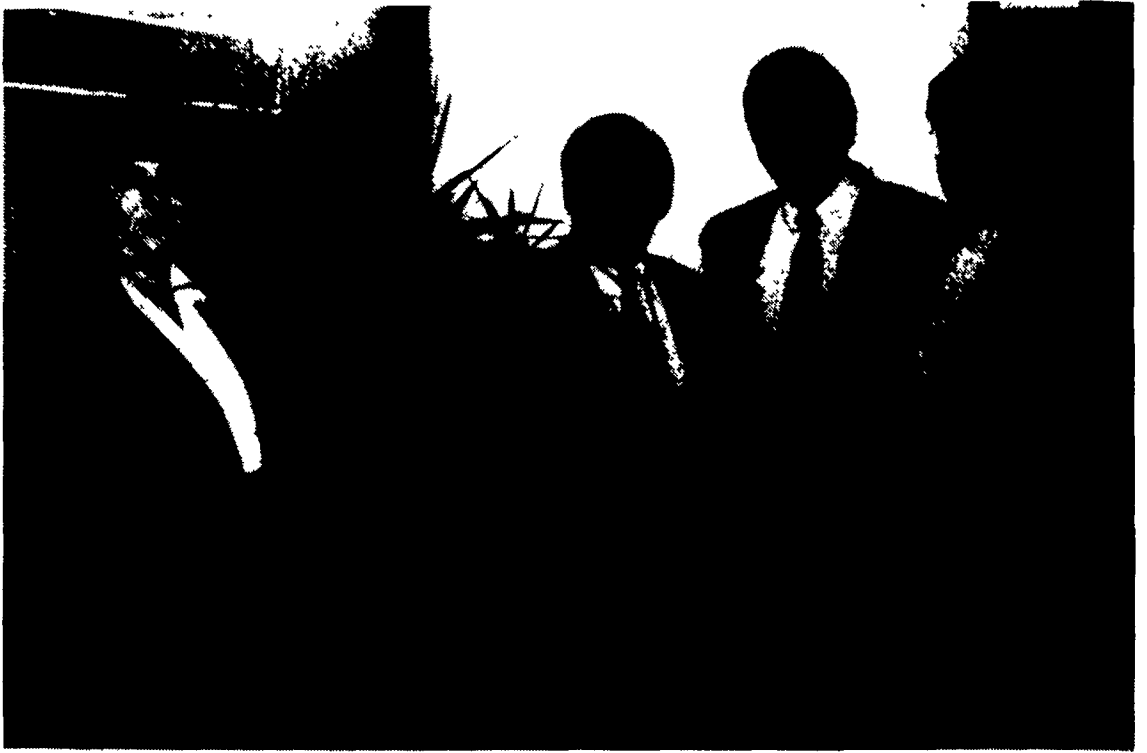
However, not everyone in agriculture is sure that Gekas's proposal is needed.

Or even desired.

Steve Kopperud, lobbyist and vice president of the American Feed Industry Association, said that the AFIA position is that, while the 1992 Animal Enterprise Protection Act was and is a necessary and important protection for those whose property has been put at risk by animal rights terrorism (including farmers), the amendment proposed by Gekas doesn't provide any additional protection to people.

He said that while the proposed amendment is specific in addressing protections for people, existing laws already provide those protections, therefore, it is perceived as over-legislation.

He said this is especially so, because, as of yet, there have been no court cases which would require the amendment and, in the AFIA's viewpoint, no logical rea-



From the left, those who support federal legislative proposals to protect people who use animals are, from the left, Brenda Shambaugh, with Pennsylvania State Grange, Susan Paris, president of the Americans For Medical Progress, Inc., Kenneth Brandt, with Pennsylvanians for Responsible Animal Use, U.S. Rep. George Gekas, who proposed the legislation, and Jan Carson, with the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

son to suspect that prosecutors would use the law if it were passed.

"We have the greatest respect for Gekas," Kopperud said during a Thursday telephone interview from his Washington, D.C. office.

"If not for him, we wouldn't have the fundamental law (Animal Enterprise Protection Act) at all. But we just think it's premature."

Kopperud explained that the key for getting the AEP Act passed was the lack of legal protection afforded animal enterprise operations.

However, he said this time it's different, because there are many laws on the books which cover terrorism, vandalism, assault, and other forms of personal attack.

In a newsletter he publishes, Kopperud said the AFIA, and the National Association for Biomedical Research, among others are looking more to see "how existing state law — such as anti-stalking laws, for instance — can be effectively used to provide enhanced personal protections for animal enterprise employees."

The newsletter further states that "the Department of Justice has been asked to create a model state bill to protect individuals against harassment and 'stalking,' and AFIA will continue to research ways in which this model can provide more protection for individuals."

Following the news briefing, Lang and personnel of the Hershey

biomedical facility offered a tour of its facilities, where research is ongoing for finding cures for terminal and crippling diseases.

As department head, Lang has for years been open to press inquiries and tours of the biomedical research facilities, in an effort to allow the public to better understand the strict rules and regula-

tions and the professional moral and ethical codes which are in place for those who conduct biomedical research with animals.

On Monday, it was evident that the hospital has upped security around the facility as only invited media who parked in an assigned and guarded parking lot were admitted to the conference.



Paul Campbell prepares to drive the corn test plot harvester as Gary Stewart, left, and Earl Rohrer discuss harvesting procedures.

## Corn Test Plots Harvested

SMOKETOWN (Lancaster Co.)—The test plot corn harvest machine moved forward a short distance, stopped, weighed and moisture-tested the shelled corn, filed the information in the computer and moved on again. This sequence of short moves was repeated many times last Friday as the AgriPro test plots for P. L. Rohrer & Bro., Inc., were checked for yields. Gary Stewart from Brookston, Illinois, and Paul Campbell from Rohrer's had a full day's work to shell and test 830 plots that were grown just east of Intercourse. The plots represented research on varieties that may become future seed offerings. In addition, 140 plots were demonstrations.

The local test plots are represen-

tative of the 100,000 test plots AgriPro had across the nation. Stewart sees a lot of different areas in the country where corn is grown as he travels on the job as a research corn breeder. And he sees the 1993 corn as "not quite as large a crop as expected."

It's so variable from state to state and even within counties," Stewart said. "A wet spring and the floods and droughts of the summer will affect the crop. It's too early to know exactly what the frost will do in some areas where the corn was planted late."

As for seed corn supplies, Stewart thinks there will be adequate supplies of most varieties. Any deficiencies will be made up in winter production in warm climates.



U.S. Rep. George Gekas stands with Dr. Max Lang, head of biomedical research at Hershey Medical Center, George Prophet, a surgeon's assistant, and Dr. Alan Snyder, an engineer, during a tour of the research facility. The young Holstein steer, "Lenny," is the research subject in the study of an artificial heart.