

SHOWING ANIMALS RESPECT AND KINDNESS
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Sheriff Bill Lancaster
Kiowa County Sheriff
301 S Jefferson St
Hobart, Oklahoma

August 31, 2015

Dear Sheriff Lancaster,

On September 5, 2014, United States Senator James Inhofe held a political fundraiser that we believe violated Oklahoma state cruelty laws.

Part of the fundraiser was an “*Old World Pigeon Shoot*” that was held on the Lugert-Altus Irrigation District property located in Kiowa County. At the pigeon shoot, 1,000 birds, many who were tame and had bands on them, were hand thrown into the air and shot at as living targets by attendees of Senator Inhofe’s fundraiser. You can watch video taken at the fundraiser, which shows the general cruelty as well as specific acts, here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDbN36abT0k>

We contend that the acts of cruelty committed at the pigeon shoot clearly violated Oklahoma State law §1685, §1686 and §1691.

Pigeons have existed in North America since the 1600’s, 300 years before Oklahoma became a state. That means they were native to Oklahoma at the time of its creation in 1907. Pigeons do not fall under the state Game Code nor are they excluded from the anti-cruelty statutes. That means they are a protected species.

§ 1685. Cruelty to animals

Any person who shall willfully or maliciously torture, destroy or kill, or cruelly beat or injure, maim or mutilate any animal in subjugation or captivity, whether wild or tame, and whether belonging to the person or to another, or deprive any such animal of necessary food, drink, shelter, or veterinary care to prevent suffering; or who shall cause, procure or permit any such animal to be so tortured, destroyed or killed, or cruelly beaten or injured, maimed or mutilated, or deprived of necessary food, drink, shelter, or veterinary care to prevent suffering; or who shall willfully set

on foot, instigate, engage in, or in any way further any act of cruelty to any animal, or any act tending to produce such cruelty, shall be guilty of a felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the State Penitentiary not exceeding five (5) years, or by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one (1) year, or by a fine not exceeding Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00). Any animal so maltreated or abused shall be considered an abused or neglected animal.

- **SHARK's evidence shows that pigeons were willfully kicked, mutilated, shot, wounded, destroyed and tortured.**

§ 1686. Abandoned animals--Destroyed how

D. For the purpose of the provisions of this section and Section 1691 of this title, the term "abandon" means the voluntary relinquishment of an animal and shall include but shall not be limited to vacating a premises and leaving the animal in or at the premises, or failing to feed the animal or allowing it to stray or wander onto private or public property with the intention of surrendering ownership or custody over the animal.

- **Numerous pigeons were abandoned at the shoot. Some birds were wounded, yet could fly away, while those who were not wounded dispersed to other areas outside the shooting field. As many of these birds appeared tame, they would most likely not have had any ability to survive on their own.**

§ 1691. Abandoning of domestic animals along streets or highways or in any public place prohibited

Any person who deposits any live dog, cat, or other domestic animal along any private or public roadway, or in any other private or public place with the intention of abandoning the domestic animal upon conviction, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

- **SHARK's documentation shows that some of the pigeons had bands on their legs, meaning they were owned and domesticated. Whether wild or domesticated, the abandonment of these birds is illegal under the law.**

We not only are calling for Senator Inhofe, as the organizer and therefore responsible party for the cruelty to be charged, but we are also asking that two other individuals, whose names we have uncovered, be charged as well.

At the 3:33 mark on the video, you will see a man who we have identified as Brian Bush, CEO of the Altus Chamber of Commerce, picking up a wounded bird and throwing her into the air to be shot. Here is Mr. Bush's contact info from the Chamber of Commerce website: <http://www.altuschamber.com/our-staff/>

Here is Mr. Bush in a frame from the video:



The second person we have identified is Tom Buchanan, general manager of the Lugert-Altus Irrigation District property where the shoot was held. Mr. Buchanan worked at the fundraiser throwing birds into the air to be shot. Here are frames from our video showing him doing this:





We are very aware that two of your deputies worked as security for Senator Inhofe at the pigeon shoot, and that, as officers of the law, they should have stopped the shoot from happening. However, as sheriff, and sworn upholder of the law, you have a responsibility to ignore political pressures and ensure that Senator Inhofe, Mr. Bush and Mr. Buchanan are held responsible for their actions.

Sincerely,

Steve Hindi
President, SHowing Animals Respect and Kindness