

**In the Senate and House
118th Congress
First Session
Joint Bill # _____**

**A Bill for An Act Entitled: Nonhuman Rights Act of 2021
to amend Animal Welfare Act as Amended (7 USC, §§ 2131-2159)**

IN THE SENATE and HOUSE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

_____, 2021

Senators _____ introduced the following bill which was referred to the Committees on Agriculture, and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and

Representatives _____ introduced the following bill which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

Joint Proposal

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, that the following bill is proposed as federal law under the jurisdiction of the United States of America, enforceable by Executive action.

1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in
2. Congress assembled, That nonhuman beings deserve the rights to life, liberty and the freedom
3. not to be used as commodities or resources of human beings.
4. Nonhuman beings possess sentience and consciousness or self-awareness because they have
5. central nervous systems. Scientific evidence shows that human beings and nonhuman beings are
6. similar because they all possess sentience, self-awareness and consciousness. Sentience is the
7. exclusive, necessary and sufficient condition for the right not to be regarded as property and to
8. be considered a member of the moral community. Sentience is the capability of feeling.
9. Scientific evidence exists that both human and nonhuman beings have central nervous
10. systems unlike plants which can respond to external stimuli, but cannot experience emotions
11. because they do not have central nervous systems. Scientific proof exists that in order to possess
12. sentience, the capability of feeling, a being must have a central nervous system. All human and
13. nonhuman living beings possess sentience because all living beings have the ability to
14. experience feelings of pain, sadness, loneliness, depression, pleasure, happiness, love, joy and
15. other emotions. Sentience is the exclusive, necessary and sufficient condition for the possession
16. of rights to life, liberty and freedom not to be used as commodities or resources of other living
17. beings. Nonhuman beings, like human beings, have the right not to be regarded as property and
18. to represent members of the moral community based on sentience alone. If a living being has a
19. right to life, then that being also has a right not to be treated as property or considered as
20. property. The right to life is a fundamental right in that it gives rise to important subsidiary
21. rights such as the right not to be killed for food or clothing or for other reasons; the right not to
22. be experimented upon; the right not to be used for entertainment. No characteristics beyond
23. sentience can represent additional necessary and sufficient conditions for fundamental rights

24. such as the ability to reason. If the ability to reason were necessary for basic rights, then human
25. infants and many mentally challenged human individuals must be regarded as property. Reason
26. cannot serve as a condition for basic rights because human infants and mentally challenged
27. human individuals who cannot reason would not be categorized as members of the moral
28. community or persons if reason were a condition of fundamental rights. Nonhuman beings are
29. not things or objects; they are living beings with feelings like human beings. Nonhuman
30. beings possess self-awareness and consciousness, have a will to live and have the capability of
31. feeling emotions like human beings. Nonhuman beings share characteristics of human infants
32. or mentally challenged human individuals, all of whom possess fundamental rights. Nonhuman
33. beings are equal to human infants or mentally challenged human individuals due to their
34. nonexistent to minimal ability to reason. Nonhuman beings shall enjoy the same status in society
35. as human infants or mentally challenged human individuals. Sentient beings desire to live and
36. want to avoid pain. Sentience is the necessary and sufficient condition for the possession of
37. fundamental rights. Thus, all sentient beings, regardless of species, deserve the rights to life,
38. liberty and the freedom not to be used as commodities or resources of human beings.
39. _____ President _____ President of the United States