

ALEC EXPOSED

"ALEC" has long been a secretive collaboration between Big Business and "conservative" politicians. Behind closed doors, they ghostwrite "model" bills to be introduced in state capitols across the country. This agenda—underwritten by global corporations—includes major tax loopholes for big industries and the super rich, proposals to offshore U.S. jobs and gut minimum wage, and efforts to weaken public health, safety, and environmental protections. Although many of these bills have become law, until now, their origin has been largely unknown. With **ALEC EXPOSED**, the Center for Media and Democracy hopes more Americans will study the bills to understand the depth and breadth of how big corporations are changing the legal rules and undermining democracy across the nation.

ALEC's Corporate Board --in recent past or present

- AT&T Services, Inc.
- centerpoint360
- UPS
- Bayer Corporation
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Energy Future Holdings
- Johnson & Johnson
- Coca-Cola Company
- PhRMA
- Kraft Foods, Inc.
- Coca-Cola Co.
- Pfizer Inc.
- Reed Elsevier, Inc.
- DIAGEO
- Peabody Energy
- Intuit, Inc.
- Koch Industries, Inc.
- ExxonMobil
- Verizon
- Reynolds American Inc.
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Salt River Project
- Altria Client Services, Inc.
- American Bail Coalition
- State Farm Insurance

For more on these corporations, search at www.SourceWatch.org.

DID YOU KNOW? Corporations VOTED to adopt this. Through ALEC, global companies work as "equals" in "unison" with politicians to write laws to govern your life. Big Business has "a VOICE and a VOTE," according to newly exposed documents. **DO YOU?**

Did you know that Victor Schwartz--a lawyer who represents companies in product litigation--was the corporate co-chair in 2011?

Home → Model Legislation → Civil Justice → **Resolution on Animal Liability and Guardianship**

WHEREAS, individuals historically could not collect non-economic damages in animal litigation, and the existing legal and legislative framework that defines the relationship between livestock producers and their animals, pet owners and their pets, and animal enterprises including but not limited to those defined in Section 2 of the Animal Welfare Act, (7USCS § 2132) maintains a healthy balance between the rights of these individuals and enterprises and the responsible care and well-being of all animals; and

WHEREAS, this balance, the dramatic advances in recent years in animal care options, and the strict, consistent and ongoing enforcement of anti-cruelty laws promotes the responsible care of animals, deters abuse and promotes owners access to innovative, quality, affordable veterinary care; and

WHEREAS, this legal balance is currently being threatened by a growing movement whose ultimate objective is to give pets, livestock and other animals the same or similar legal rights and standing as people; and

WHEREAS, some are attempting to further their objectives by advocating legislation that would reclassify pets, livestock or other animal "owners" as "guardians", claiming that reclassification is just a harmless recognition of the increasing value and relationship we now place on pets, livestock and other animals; and

WHEREAS, guardianship statues would undermine the protective care that owners can provide for their animals and the freedom of choice owners now are free to exercise, and could permit third parties to petition courts for custody of a pet, livestock or animal for which they do not approve of the husbandry practices; and

WHEREAS, guardianship statues would permit challenging in a court of law the course of treatment an animal's owner and veterinarian decide on, or permit animal owners and veterinarians to be sued for providing what another individual may regard as inadequate care; and

WHEREAS, some individuals are advocating legislation to expand tort law to permit the recovery of non-economic damages, which are non-objectively verifiable monetary losses such as emotional distress, pain and suffering, sentimental value, and loss of companionship, against veterinarians, livestock producers, animal enterprises and others that provide animals with goods and services, even though such recovery is typically not available for injuries to close relatives in marital and parental relationships; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative impact of these initiatives would be counterproductive because it would limit - or even eliminate - the animal owners' ability to freely choose appropriate treatment for their animals, set off a chain of events that would inevitably increase the cost of livestock production and the cost of the animal's well-being, and as a result would ultimately erode access to affordable and high quality animal health care; and

BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the American Legislative Exchange Council opposes legislation that reclassifies pet, livestock or animal owners as guardians or that otherwise alters the legal status of animals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the American Legislative Exchange Council opposes legislation permitting any of the following: (1) the recovery of any type of non-economic damages for the loss or injury of a pet, livestock or other animal; (2) the inclusion of any type of non-economic compensatory damages in assessing economic damages, which are objectively verifiable monetary losses, or exemplary damages, which are damages awarded to penalize or punish a defendant; and (3) the redefining of the tort of negligent infliction of emotion distress to allow people to recover emotional distress damages in litigation involving animals.

Adopted by the Civil Justice Task Force at the Annual Meeting on July 20, 2005.
Approved by the ALEC Board of Directors August, 2005.

About Us and ALEC EXPOSED. The Center for Media and Democracy reports on corporate spin and government propaganda. We are located in Madison, Wisconsin, and publish www.PRWatch.org, www.SourceWatch.org, and now www.ALECexposed.org. For more information contact: editor@prwatch.org or 608-260-9713.

From CMD: This resolution attempts to limit recovery for American pet owners whose dogs or cats are killed as result of corporate negligence, basically to their replacement cost. The resolution would allow corporations that manufacture or sell pet food, for example, that is harmful or dangerous to escape liability for negligence except for mostly nominal costs and would limit the availability of punitive damages for gross negligence or misconduct. It also would prevent a jury from considering any claim for emotional damages as a result of losing an animal companion, no matter the circumstances.