

2023 National Animal Law Competitions

Legislative Drafting & Lobbying Competition

Registration Round

You are the director of government affairs for People Protecting Animals (PPA), a national animal protection organization headquartered in the State of Bliss. Following a series of disturbing U.S. Department of Agriculture citations for significant Animal Welfare Act (AWA) violations, PPA conducted an undercover investigation of Viab, a large-scale breeding facility which breeds and sells dogs for animal experimentation. Viab, owned by Pioneering, Inc., has supplied dogs to research universities, government agencies, medical centers, and major drug developers.

The USDA citations and the undercover investigation identified chilling conditions at Viab, including that staff killed puppies inhumanely; denied nursing mothers food; left dogs soaking after spraying them with high-pressure hoses; ignored moldy feces in dog enclosures; and killed dogs who had easily treatable conditions. Dog food throughout the facility contained mold, feces, and maggots. Documentation showed that Viab kept dogs in severely overcrowded, stressful conditions that resulted in dogs attacking each other through the kennel bars with their limbs, ears, or tails pulled into adjacent kennels. Viab declined to treat the dogs injured in these fights and instead euthanized them. Almost 400 puppy deaths were attributed to “unknown causes” in just a few months. Federal officials also documented that Viab allowed the facility to remain perpetually understaffed with only one full-time veterinarian and fewer than thirty employees on site to care for over 5,000 dogs.

PPA’s media campaign publicizing the results of the undercover investigation and the earlier AWA violations was a robust success. Every major newspaper in the state repeatedly reported on the investigation. The horrific conditions also sparked national news coverage spanning the political spectrum, including *The Old York Times*, the *National Overview*, and cable news networks Fox News and BNN.

While PPA maintains a national advocacy focus, the organization also spends a significant amount of time lobbying for policy improvements at the state level in Bliss. Just after the media campaign launched, one of your top legislative allies, State Senator J. Johnson (R), texted you with a link to the *National Overview* article and this message: “Call my office. We need to do something. This session. And I want to go big.”

At your meeting with Senator Johnson, you learn that they have a few goals. They believe that federal actions were neither strong nor swift enough to address conditions at Viab. Senator Johnson asks you to ensure, at minimum, that the state has the power to act if this type of facility is again cited by federal officials. The senator shares that they are happy to file legislation that will hit Viab in its pocket and believes that there is an important role here for civil penalties, fines, or other sanctions. However, it is especially important to them that state law enforcement has concurrent jurisdiction with the federal government. they specifically mention inspections and bringing charges pursuant to the state’s criminal animal cruelty law.

Viab is not the only laboratory animal breeding facility in Bliss. Pioneering, Inc. maintains other facilities where rodents are similarly bred to be sold for animal experimentation. It is important to Senator Johnson that most animals bred for research in Bliss are covered by this legislation.

Finally, Senator Johnson has requested that you include any other provision(s) that you and PPA believe will improve the lives of animals raised for or used in animal experimentation. However, they know that memories can be short in the Bliss capitol. They want to “get something done” this legislative session while public pressure remains high and while the media remains focused on the issue. Senator Johnson advises you to keep this in mind as you are drafting.

You are instructed to:

1. Draft a state bill that accomplishes Senator Johnson’s desired goals. (Note: you may use U.S. state or federal laws or bills to guide your research. You also may refer to any existing judicial opinions and resources from any bar association.)
2. Create a fact sheet for your bill.
3. Create a brief video of yourself giving an elevator pitch for your bill. Your elevator pitch should be a short synopsis of your bill, its purpose, and your ask. The video must be no longer than 2 minutes and in mp4 format. For the elevator pitch, imagine that you have had difficulty securing a meeting with a key legislator for co-sponsorship. You then catch them as they are leaving a late-evening session and you only have a moment to make your case.
4. Approach members for their sponsorship, co-sponsorship, and to take key actions on a state bill. The state legislature has 200 members (160 representatives and 40 senators).

Your bill number is Senate Bill 966.

The length of your bill shall be no less than one (1) page and no more than five (5) pages. Competitors should determine proper formatting based on their own research; however, font size must be no smaller than 12-point Garamond or Century font type with one-inch page margins. Inclusion of “findings” or “purpose” at the beginning of the bill is discretionary and will be included in the final page count.

The fact sheet must be no more than one (1) page and one (1) side in length with the same style requirements as set forth above for the bill.

Please consult the Legislative Drafting & Lobbying [Competition Rules](#) for further information.