

Mr Olivér Várhelyi

European Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Email:

Oliver.VARHELYI@ec.europa.eu
Flavio.FACIONI@ec.europa.eu
Gabor.WYSZOCZKY@ec.europa.eu

Brussels, 13 October 2025

Subject: Ensuring Ambition and Inclusivity in the Future EU Animal Welfare Legislation

Dear Commissioner Várhelyi,

As Members of the European Parliament who care about the welfare of animals in the European Union, we welcome the European Commission's decision to re-launch the call for evidence on the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation. This marks a long-overdue step towards modernising an outdated legal framework, a reform that is both urgent and necessary.

We are encouraged by the reaffirmation of the Commission's commitment to phase out the use of cages in animal farming, a demand that has been echoed by 1.4 million EU citizens through the End the Cage Age European Citizens' Initiative and by the European Parliament in its resolution B9-0296/2021. While this renewed commitment is welcome, the significant delay in delivering the legislative proposals remains a serious concern.

We therefore strongly urge the Commission to act swiftly and decisively. This initiative offers a crucial opportunity to honour the Commission's 2023 pledge and to align the EU's food and agriculture policy with both scientific evidence and societal expectations.

As Members of the European Parliament, we call on the Commission to ensure that the forthcoming legislative proposals are ambitious and inclusive, covering all farmed species, including aquatic animals and meat chickens, who are reared in the billions across the Union.

In particular, we call on the Commission to:

- Communicate a clear and comprehensive timeline for the phasing out of cages across all sectors, ensuring predictability and clarity for citizens and stakeholders;

- Include all farmed species in the scope of the revised legislation, in line with the latest scientific knowledge and ethical considerations, and produce a clear timeline for each sector concerned;
- End the systematic killing of day-old chicks, a practice affecting over 300 million sentient beings annually, and which is increasingly rejected by citizens;
- Introduce import requirements for animals and animal products, to prevent the outsourcing of cruelty and to safeguard a level playing field for EU farmers committed to higher welfare standards.

While outcome-based indicators may support improved enforcement, they must not replace clear, input-based legal requirements. Indicators are valuable tools, but without strong and science-based provisions, they cannot deliver the comprehensive reform of animal farming that is urgently needed.

We urge the Commission to ensure that the revised legislation is rooted in robust science and aligned with the expectations of EU citizens. A modernised legislative framework is essential not only to improve animal welfare but also to strengthen the credibility, sustainability, and resilience of the EU's food system. EU farmers deserve strong and consistent support through this transition, a support that is fair and matched with meaningful, enforceable standards.

We stand ready to support the Commission in delivering an ambitious and comprehensive legislative proposal in 2026, and we call for the preparatory consultations in 2025 to be inclusive, transparent, and evidence-based. We also hope that the European Commission Work Programme 2026 will include concrete initiatives on animal welfare, demonstrating the Commission's commitment to both scientific evidence and societal expectations.

Yours sincerely,

Niels Fuglsang MEP,

President of the Animal Welfare Intergroup

Veronika Vrečnionová MEP

Sirpa Pietikäinen MEP

Manuela Ripa MEP

Thomas Waitz MEP

Lena Schilling MEP

Sara Matthieu MEP

Ville Niinistö MEP

Marie Toussaint MEP

David Cormand MEP

Majdouline Sbai MEP

Mounir Satouri MEP

Martin Häusling MEP

Cristina Guarda MEP

Tilly Metz MEP

Anna Strolenberg MEP

Nicolae Bogdanel Ștefănuță MEP

Rasmus Norqvist MEP

Pär Holmgren MEP

Alice Kuhnke MEP

Isabella Lövin MEP

Maria Zacharia MEP

Anne Sofie Frigout MEP

Petras Auštrevičius MEP

Raquel García Hermida Vanderwalle MEP

Martin Hojsík MEP

Michał Wiezik MEP

Günther Sidl MEP

Estelle Ceulemans MEP

Kristian Vigenin MEP

Romana Jerković MEP

Marina Kaljurand MEP

Thomas Pellerin-Carlin MEP

Maria Noichl MEP

Annalisa Corrado MEP

Brando Benifei MEP

Marc Angel MEP

Krzysztof Śmiszek MEP

Evin Incir MEP

Per Clausen MEP

Sebastian Everding MEP

Merja Kyllönen MEP

Lynn Boylan MEP

Dario Tamburrano MEP

Anja Hazekamp MEP

Isabel Sarra Sánchez MEP

Jonas Sjöstedt MEP

Younous Omarjee MEP

Ignazio Marino MEP