natural hazards. For such reason, the importance of the accuracy in the records or documents that the agency provides must be recognized. Regarding the USGS’s maps of our Island, it is essential that these maps are updated in order to avoid issues in future developments and make an orderly land planning feasible.

In view of these circumstances and through this Concurrent Resolution, this Legislative Assembly hereby requests the United States Congress and the pertinent federal agencies to provide for the updating of the various topographic and hydrographic maps of our Island.

Section 2.—It is hereby provided that a certification on this Concurrent Resolution shall be issued immediately to be delivered to the United States Congress and the United States Government in Puerto Rico.

Section 3.—This Concurrent Resolution shall be translated into English to be delivered as provided in Section 2.

Section 4.—This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect immediately after its approval.

POM-169. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico memorializing the Assembly’s opposition to H.R. 4202, the “Parity in Animal Cruelty Enforcement Act,” to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

S. CON. RES. 28

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The sport of cockfighting began in Puerto Rico in the 17th century, when it was officially established on April 5, 1770 by the decree of Spanish governor Don Miguel de Muesas. At that time, cockfighting was already a pastime in most European countries. It was so popular that, during the reign of King Henry VIII, cockfights were held in the Palace of Whitehall, in the courtyards and interior rooms of the palace. In addition, the sport was also well established in the Parliament. Likewise, cockfights were so popular in France that they adopted the gamecock as their national symbol.

In the United States, some presidents were fans of the sport, among them, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and Abraham Lincoln, who was also known as “Honest Abe,” due to being a good pit judge. In fact, many years, it was acceptable and encouraged in the United States for a gentleman to raise game fowls and be an expert at the sport.

Over the years, cockfighting became a popular sport across the nation. In 1898, the sport was banned from Puerto Rico because it was a territory of the United States of America, but underground cockfights continued. However, as a result of the fight put up by the third President of the Senate of Puerto Rico, the Honorable Rafael Martínez-Nadal, who was a fan of the sport and defended this Island tradition, then Governor of Puerto Rico, Robert Goer, repealed the ban and promulgated legislation which recognized cockfighting as a legitimate sport in the Island.

As a result of the above mentioned, the rule of law has recognized that the sport of cockfighting has been part of our culture and traditions. According to José S. Alegría, “the sport of cockfighting was a leveling that made a gentleman out of all those who visited the pits, regardless of their standing in society.” This sport is known as the “gentleman’s sport,” because the people who follow the same keep their word during the competitions, without the need for a contract or a similar document for such purposes.

Although there are fans in dozens of countries around the world, Puerto Rico is still considered “the Mecca” of cockfighting. The sport is so well established that, in Puerto Rico, cockfighting does not require subsidies from the Government of Puerto Rico. Moreover, it is estimated to generate over seventy-five thousand jobs in the field of cockfighting and related activities.

Likewise, this sport greatly impacts Puerto Rico’s tourism because we receive visitors from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and other countries who have traveled the Island to partake in the sport of cockfighting.

Since its beginnings in Puerto Rico, the sport of cockfighting has faced great challenges and has overcome them. In 2007, the Federal Government passed the Animal Welfare Act[sic], Pub. Law 110-22 which classified as a felony the transport, sale, and purchase of gamecocks. However, there are still legitimate cockfights which are not fit to continue fighting. Once the fight is over, they are retired, subjected to excessive punishment or that a gamecock is not fit to continue fighting. Furthermore, pit judges are empowered to stop the fight if they notice either excessive punishment or that a gamecock is not fit to continue fighting. Once the fight is over, both gamecocks are examined by specialized staff and treated accordingly for their prompt recovery. Hence, it is evident that our Government and the protection of gamecocks.

The enactment of H.R. 4202 shall threaten a century-old practice that is deeply rooted in our culture and traditions. Moreover, said bill shall affect various components of our economy that provide services related to this sport, such as veterinarians, game fowl breeders, agricultural stores, and trophies and awards manufacturers, among others. For all of the foregoing, the Legislative Assembly is compelled to firmly and unequivocally reject the enactment of H.R. 4202, since it does not take into account the adverse effect that such bill shall have on Puerto Rico’s economy and culture.

Be it Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico:

Section 1.—To express the firm and unequivocal repudiation of the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico to H.R. 4202, the United States House of Representatives that seeks to apply the “Animal Welfare Act” to United States territories and, consequently, prohibits cockfights in Puerto Rico.

Section 2.—A certified copy of this Concurrent Resolution shall be delivered to the members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress and to the President of the United States.

Section 3.—This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.