



December 30, 2025

Board of Directors
Mercy For Animals
8033 Sunset Boulevard #864
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Dear Ms. Colizzi, Mr. Pellman Rowland, Ms. Akinci, and Ms. Mindrum,

I write on behalf of Fair Start Movement, which is a charitable organization that analyzes the systemic harms and threats to the sustainability and viability of our planet, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable populations globally, including children and future generations, animals, and the environment. It seeks solutions through law, policy, and education.

I'm also writing in my personal capacity as an attorney and leader in the animal protection movement and the human rights movement, including in various roles protecting the interests of humans, nonhuman animals, and the environment throughout my career. I started as a human rights attorney with the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to remove human rights abusers and then spent over twenty years in our movement building and leading legal and strategic animal protection initiatives and creating scholarship on how our work can truly advance the rights and protections of all of us – human and nonhuman – and fight exploitative systems to build a sustainable world.

Admittedly in this process I have developed critiques of what I see as counterproductive work in the animal protection movement and crucial errors and omissions in the way we evaluate and approach the work we do. In a nutshell, I believe we have to take into account the impact of growth and inequities in the human population as we fight against exploitative systems, understanding the plight of vulnerable populations and future generations, as well as the dire ecological crisis we are facing, and the role of factory farming in that. I think by incorporating these concepts and a more accurate calculus of present and future harm, the potential impact of our work will be immeasurably improved. Likewise, I have been outspoken in critiquing

particular players in the animal protection movement because I believe the implication of not including appropriate growth and equity considerations into our work is catastrophic and undermines our objective of protecting animals in factory farms. I now have shifted to the process of building and guiding the grassroots Fair Start Movement, largely in the U.S. and Sub-Saharan Africa. As part of this, I have honed and refined our campaigns and asks in a way I think will be beneficial for all of us, and ultimately for the animals. It's in this spirit of building a better movement that I come to you with this ask to begin to incorporate and account for these growth and equity issues in your work.

This is a moment of opportunity for Mercy For Animals. MFA has a history of innovation and thought leadership in this movement, and has weathered internal and external changes before. On the occasion of looking back over the organization's accomplishments under Leah and what the next stage of MFA should be, I invite you to recognize and begin to incorporate the central tenets of the Fair Start Movement into the formulas and metrics by which you design and measure the impact of your work, and into your campaigns. We believe it's exactly this thinking that can enhance the goals you set forth in your FAST post of "clarity, collaboration, and meaningful change for farmed animals."

The Fair Start Movement is on the brink of launching its largest campaign yet, which is tailored primarily to organizations, funders, and leaders in the animal protection movement, and which will form the intersectional movement-building basis of incorporating growth and equity considerations within the animal protection movement and across other movements around the world. This campaign is called the Tell the Truth Campaign (TTT). It has a 4 point ask:

- Assess all public interest work from an accurate baseline, like assessing how climate and political crises impact the health and freedom of women and infants disproportionately around the world. Take into account inequitable growth. Ask: how does the value and impact of your work change once you factor in children entering the world relative to what their rights and equity require?
- Work toward the universal human right to birth and political equity as the most basic norm which means a minimum or floor of empowering and equitable resources beneath which no child should be born. Ask: are we and/or others claiming to do good while treating children of color and/or poor people as worth fewer resources and more risk than the average white or wealthy child?
- Address – and require government and the industry to address – the fundamental authority any government has, including to protect the legitimacy of economic rights and capital, is contingent on measurably empowering those people subject to it, in the creation of power relations and in birth and development. Defrauding people about inequity disenfranchises people. It's not about population, it's measurable political equity. In other words, ending equity fraud is about being free to choose who has power over you.

- Use discourse and a standard to assess impact that accounts for the full impact of the system that inequitable birth and development, and one's position within it. In other words, set goals that account for and are ambitious enough to cover the full nature and scope of the harms industry causes.

We invite you to join the TTT campaign by beginning to incorporate its asks within your campaign design and metrics.

Mercy For Animals is a particular fit for this work given its core identity in two distinct respects. First, MFA is an organization that truly engages intersectionally across movements, supports the fight for racial justice, and elevates the factory farming issue in multiple spaces. Second, MFA has been dedicated to quantifiable impact-based metrics, particularly in its corporate and outreach campaigning. The TTT campaign and the Fair Start Movement's core principles are central to improving upon both of these areas. Properly accounting for the harm to vulnerable populations, people of color – especially children and future generations – is the crux of true intersectionality and a bridge for more and better work across movements. The TTT campaign also offers a more complete accounting for harm and the impact of campaigns because it takes into account not just the number of animals affected today, but what impact on growth will mean for future suffering saved over a multigenerational timeline.

What we are offering here is an opportunity to incorporate a better and more complete formula for calculating harm and impact. As we know, factory farms operate on an illegal business model, externalizing the harms to animals, the environment, workers, consumers, and communities. Our campaigns and advocacy – outreach, corporate, legal, and otherwise -- have been weak relative to the level of harm inflicted by these factory farms. Calculation of harm has been based on an incomplete and ineffective use of existing legal tools and inaccurate economic modeling which has actually further enabled such harm rather than curtailing it. Animal advocates must change our legal and economic systems to require them to catch up to recognition and remediation of the true scope of harm, across systems and even for future generations in order to address the existential threat that mega-corporations present to the rule of law and even to life on this planet.

The Problem: Improper Prioritization of Short-Term Profits and Growth Due to Future Discounting and Errors in Calculating Baseline Harms

Core to all of the harms of factory farming is the improper prioritization of short-term profits and growth without accounting for the negative externalities. Two closely related economic principles compound the harms. First, future discounting (i.e. valuation of short-term profits and growth over preservation for future health, animal life, animal welfare, and sustainability) and measuring things like amount of suffering and number of animals killed from the starting point of current production levels and demand, rather than from a baseline that reflects an ethical and sustainable amount of suffering and animal killing (which I think we'd all agree is zero or at least a negligible amount that is unavoidable through the use of sustainable plant based agriculture).

This applies also to greenhouse gas emissions. That is, we must look at what the healthy and sustainable CO2 levels would be and hold factory farming polluters accountable to meet that goal. The end result is that short-term profits and growth are valued and enabled by the law and its enforcement, and the negative externalities are borne by the animals and the public. Vulnerable populations are hardest hit, including people of color, people in poverty and developing countries, children, and future generations. Mass species extinction, exploitation, and killing of trillions of animals each year, public health crises, and the risk of total ecosystem collapse are the result. If we remain on this trajectory, things will only get worse in the coming decades.

Second, omission of the disparate impact of harm to vulnerable populations – including animals and the natural environment, children, and the effect of this trend on future generations as population grows – has caused significant under-assessment of harm. This omission has led to the application of a standard for assessing such harm that is so inadequate it threatens the efficacy of all sorts of campaigns and other advocacy in the movement, and even the legitimacy of the law that continues to justify the existence and growth of factory farming. This inadequate assessment has been employed by stakeholders across all categories, including governments, corporations, and even nonprofit organizations working on these issues.

This has resulted in widespread discounting of lives and rights, and systematic political disenfranchisement. Without correction, significant portions of the population will become functionally incapable of getting their basic human rights met and will be irredeemably politically disenfranchised. The advocates for those who don't have those voices – including animals and the environment – are weakened in their political power and efficacy as well, which will only continue to get worse over time.

Mercy For Animals' Work is Hindered by this Problem and Uniquely Positioned to Incorporate Accurate and Impactful Metrics

MFA has a long history of leadership and impact in the animal protection movement, and has been at the forefront of a holistic and intersectional view of the factory farming problem and of its work. Its mission is “to construct a compassionate food system that is not just kind to animals but essential for the future of our planet and all who share it. Our vision of a world where animals are respected, protected, and free drives the work we do every day.” This globalistic and future-focused view of MFA's mission makes it crucial to account for the problem accurately, and to apply its innovative skill set to its work incorporating an understanding of growth and sustainability.

Programmatically, according to its 2024 990, MFA's impact and focus is on “expos[ing] factory farming... [and] educating millions through social media on the benefits of plant-based eating... helping to raise awareness and inspire action for animal welfare globally.” It also “supported significant corporate and legislative wins, ensuring ongoing progress for farmed animals. Our

corporate engagement team helped advance campaigns to improve protections for farmed animals and promote plant-based eating.”

MFA’s Transformation program’s “mission is to build collective power sufficient to realize a just and sustainable food system... by helping farmers transition from industrial animal agriculture operations to raising crops for human consumption. By creating models of alternative economic opportunities, building solidarity with other movements, and shifting societal narratives to change culture, we will realize a just and sustainable food system.” This is another future-focused and systemic strategy.

“Investigations show the harsh realities of the treatment of farmed animals... and can help lead to major changes in the animal agricultural system and public perception to further action for animal welfare and protection of farmed animals.”

Each of these programs presents an opportunity and an imperative to incorporate an accurate assessment of harm and evaluation of impact into MFA’s strategy and work. A throughline of each of these programs is the commitment to changing things now for a cumulative and lasting effect on the future plight of animals, people, and the environment. All of these programs also rely essentially upon the agency and effectiveness of activists and political power. These are the central principles of TTT and the Fair Start Movement’s solutions for effecting real change.

Taking a few of the specific programs, corporate and legislative campaigning has a significant blind spot here that causes it to be potentially weak to the point of counterproductivity. If we do not take into account the growth – in profits, in demand, in market share, and in total production of animal products – that welfare-based corporate and legislative campaigns may be contributing to, these campaigns may have the effect of actually increasing suffering over the course of time in a significant way. An additive component here is the halo effect these campaigns may bring to these companies, further promoting consumerism and growth as a virtue rather than the root of the problem.

Educational and exposure-based campaigns including investigations could and should be incorporating an accurate calculus of harm, accounting for growth and the impact of the harms of industrial animal agriculture on vulnerable populations and future sustainability, as well as emphasizing the importance of reducing the overall demand and production of animal products. Vegan campaigning has heretofore not taken into account the projected growth of demand in animal products. Movement leaders have privately conceded for years that even the most optimistic projections on the success of vegan campaigning can only hope to slow the growth of demand for animal products over time, rather than reducing existing levels or reversing the trend to reducing the overall number of animals in the system or overall suffering. This issue needs to be reckoned with and inform strategy and assessment.

Perhaps the easiest program to upgrade under the Fair Start Movement’s principles is Transformation. With its objective to create a holistically just and sustainable food system, any

impact it can have on shifting the paradigm and transforming the system now will have an amplified effect in the future, shifting away from the highly consolidated corporate animal-based model that is centered on and slated to grow dramatically over time. If Transformation succeeds today, its effects will be much greater than if it were to try to correct the problem in 10, 20, or 50 years' time.

The Solution; Incorporate Growth-Based Standards for Calculating Harms into Your Campaigns and Metrics

As MFA and other organizations that work with the TTT campaign design their strategies, you can correct the basis for which you are calculating harms and impact by taking into account the impact on animals, vulnerable populations, and future generations using an objective measure. This objective measure accurately assesses damages and should be used in evaluating what kinds of interventions and campaigns can be used in your strategy against factory farming, how effective your campaigns are as they progress, and incorporated into your outreach and education and bridge-building between social justice movements. Two types of actions can and should underly a variety of campaigns and strategies:

1. Reduce or eliminate future discounting in cases where there is harm that will continue. Instead, take into account the projected growth of the exploitation and growth of harm over time. The most important situations to apply this principle to are cases where animals and ecosystem health and survivability, young people, vulnerable populations, and future generations face disproportionate harm.
2. Use a zero-baseline calculus of harm. Fair Start Movement advocates for the recognition of harms to all, including animals and the environment, young people, and future generations. By considering the welfare of life holistically, and on a longer timeline, we can account more accurately for the level and type of harm factory farming is inflicting and upon whom.

Impacts on farmed animals, poor people, people of color, children, and future generations, are disproportionately high now and those divides will continue to grow. The current campaign, educational, and legal approach also does not take into account the acceleration of production of animal products, suffering, demand, and ecological devastation and system collapse corporate bad actors are creating for short-term gains. In particular, any legitimate advocacy work must include an understanding of future animals, children's welfare, and future generations in light of the existential threats to our environment and geopolitical future.

Harms to young, the vulnerable – including people, animals, and the environment, and future generations – and the likelihood of acceleration of those harms if current trends are allowed to continue – should be taken into account in any campaigning against factory farming. In addition, in the case of factory farming, where the underlying harm is a driver of growth of the corporation or sector – by competitive advantage, simple externalizing of costs to increase profits, and/or by false representations to consumers, investors, or regulators – campaign objectives that account

for this should be incorporated to take into account the disparate, ongoing, and growing harms caused by factory farming. Breaking away from the pack by reliance on illegal and damaging practices now sets into motion growth and acceleration which increases damage as a whole.

Factory Farming's current and projected harms also pose a fundamental threat to the legitimacy of law and our power as political citizens in a representative democracy. Factory farming corporations have been allowed unfettered – and in fact highly assisted – growth, which has put children and future generations in a position of inheriting a world that is both ecologically worse off than ever and where they have no functional opportunity to reverse course due to the relative political disempowerment that the exploitative industries have created.

The scope of this problem is so large that it poses a fundamental threat to our democratic system of government. Ecological collapse due to climate change, deforestation, and a litany of similar existential harms have robbed massive numbers of people the meaningful right to participate in the political process, let alone enjoy the exercise of their legal rights. Their ability to advocate for animals and other politically disenfranchised groups is further weakened. Corporate growth and profitability does not necessarily support even baseline human rights. In fact, at some point enabling such corporate growth and profitability to the exclusion of other things reduces humans to mere instruments of corporate objectives. For some populations now – and certainly for many future generations – that balance has tipped, such that corporate profits have subsumed even the basic ability for people to participate in and consent to their own governance. Their access to basic needs such as clean water and a livable environment has been or will be denied. Corporate bad actors – especially factory farm corporations – are undoubtedly the major cause of such existential harms.

The representation of the governed is the basis of the authority to govern, and is the preemptive standard from which all other legal authority derives. The situation we are facing as a result of corporate harms poses such an existential threat that it has either passed now or will soon pass the threshold of disenfranchisement if these kinds of harms persist unabated. At some point, the threat becomes so dire, the very basis of law is threatened. Large swaths of people have no meaningful representative rights and access, and it will only continue to get worse. This threat to equity and political representation necessitates the accurate and objective harm standards set forth in this letter.

All legal systems, political entities, constitutions, courts, precedents, statutes, and the like are predicated on the simple premise of citizen representation. All legal authority derives from such representation. The cornerstone of political representation is the “one person, one vote” standard for equal protection. The environmental harms caused largely by multinational factory farming and other corporations impact the population in such a disparate way, and that disparate impact is set to accelerate in our children's lifetime and for future generations, that the very concept of political legitimacy through representation is undermined. We stand to leave our children and future generations with an irredeemable ecological, legal, and geopolitical mess. It is only

through the objectivity and accuracy of the preemptive standard we propose here that we may find remedies to reverse course. Any remedies applied after-the-fact in an attempt to right this will fall far short of the mark unless a standard is used that takes children and future generations' right to a sustainable environment and functional democracy into account.

Failing this, vulnerable populations, children, and future generations must live in a society where they are in ecological crisis, have no meaningful political power to shape reforms, and are required to follow the law without actually being empowered by it. The preemptive standard takes these interests into account, incorporating constitutive political equity and self-determination into its metric. As compared with the current standard which was derived from commercialized standards of welfare that prioritized profit and growth, there are massive differences in terms of things like permissible emissions, levels of democratic representation, minimal birth and development conditions for children, and many others. The current commercially based standards are not based on legitimate legal principles, are killing millions, will continue to do so, and pose an existential risk to life on earth over time.

Fair Start's full justice standard to preserve freedom and self-determination

The Fair Start Movement seeks what we call a *full justice* standard, which requires no child is born beneath a threshold of resources necessary for freedom and self-determination. In other words, we do not want to see any life brought into a planet that is irredeemable. That may already be happening to some in this generation, and with the trajectory we are currently on, it is only a matter of time before the next generation or the one after that is handed a planet and political system that they have no power to fix. We face an unsolvable ecological and geopolitical crisis with no meaningful access to the tools – political, economic, educational, and otherwise – to give any hope of redemption. Corporate harms and the disparate impacts of these corporate harms directly cause this powerlessness. Factory farming corporations are at the center of this problem.

- a. *Measurement of harms accurately, from zero baseline standards and without future discounting, is necessary to preserve democracy and the government's own right to govern*
- b. *Protecting political legitimacy requires prioritization and inclusion of children and future generations*

In order to have any meaningful attempt at a “one person, one vote” democratic institution, from which all legal authority derives, a certain baseline requirement must be met: children need minimum thresholds of well-being and empowerment, or they simply do not have access to political representation of any kind. Infants possess a constitutionally protected right to life, bodily integrity, and health.

As explored by Nobel Laureate Steven Chu in Forbes, "[The World Economy Is a Pyramid Scheme](#),” this systemic exploitation continues to enrich the few at the expense of millions,

perpetuating cycles of inequity and environmental degradation. The omission of children's rights not only weakens the chain of legitimacy but also allows performative fraud to undo the "object in the subject," thus undermining justice. No valuation system outside of zero remains for the omitted, who are those left without recognition or investment in their future. The inequitable growth this ensured was sustained for less than a handful of generations before it caused catastrophic economic, ecological and political outcomes, creating unsustainable demand, cheap labor, and diluted political equity - all enabled by discounting future children's rights – and in fact the rights of all future life. The standard has allowed benchmarking of terms like green, humane, eco, sustainable, net-zero, equitable, etc. that in ways that have no connection to the actual birth and development conditions children need to survive, and benchmarking process that has been driven by a first-order lack of equity standards in value assessments and claims.

The preemptive standard argued for here has a number of campaign, legal, and policy implications and potential applications, including incentivized parenting delay, equity reparations, and a resource measure below which no child should be born.

MFA is a leader and a pathbreaker in the animal protection movement. This is a moment of unique opportunity to level up the impact of its work and its leadership across our movement and others. I invite you to reach out to me and to the Fair Start Movement to engage in a dialogue around how to improve the course of progress for today and generations to come.

Sincerely,

Carter Dillard, and The Team at Fair Start Movement