



Acclaimed advocate to headline supersized animal law event 17 April 2009

A leading litigator for animals, commercial lawyer and esteemed academic from the United States will deliver the keynote speech at an upcoming animal law event on Thursday 14 May, "Animal Law 101: Australian and International Perspectives".

Bruce Wagman is a partner in the San Francisco commercial law firm Schiff Hardin, whose distinguished career has included litigating some of America's most significant animal law cases affecting animals in farming, entertainment, biomedical research and more. He serves as the Chief Outside Litigation Counsel for the Animal Legal Defense Fund (US) and has represented private and organisational clients in state and federal courts across the United States. Mr Wagman has also taught animal law at Universities such as Stanford and Berkeley, and co-authored America's first casebook on animal law.

Brought to Australia as part of the animal protection think-tank Voiceless's third annual Animal Law Lecture Series, Mr Wagman will travel from city to city lifting the veil of secrecy on farm animal suffering and discussing how animals can be protected through strategic and public interest litigation. As part of his Melbourne tour, he will participate in a supersized event in the Victoria Law Foundation Law Week 2009 calendar, coordinated by three organisations working to promote better outcomes for animals through legal advocacy: Lawyers for Animals; Voiceless; and the pro bono animal law service at the Public Interest Law Clearing House (PALS@PILCH).

Announcing Mr Wagman as the keynote speaker, Voiceless Managing Director Brian Sherman AM said: "Every year billions of farm animals are raised for food and food production in Australia and the US. The vast majority are housed in giant factory farms in which they endure lives of permanent confinement and systemic cruelty, much of which is legal. Together with my co-director, Ondine Sherman, I am proud to welcome Bruce Wagman to draw upon his considerable experience challenging the exploitation of animals. Bruce will demonstrate how lessons learned in America may apply to Australia and why animal protection law is fast becoming everyone's business."

Mr Wagman will be joined by two notable panellists: Graeme McEwen, Chair of the Barristers' Animal Welfare Panel; and Katrina Sharman, Corporate Counsel for Voiceless, who will participate in an interactive Q&A session on deficiencies in Australian animal laws and ways to promote change.

President of Lawyers for Animals, David Glasgow, said: "Lawyers for Animals has run an event as part of Law Week for a few years. This looks set to be our biggest ever and we are proud to team up with Voiceless and PALS@PILCH to deliver it. Many people don't realise the startling defects in

animal welfare laws – how they exempt most animals from protection, how they permit profound and inexcusable cruelty, and how poorly enforced they are. We hope this event will go some way to educating the legal community and the general public on animal protection issues, both in Australia and internationally. We also hope people will walk away inspired to help alleviate animal suffering.”

The event will also mark the official launch of PALS@PILCH, a pro bono animal legal service linking animal protection organisations and concerned individuals with lawyers who are willing to provide free legal services to promote better animal protection outcomes.

Guy Donovan, Project Officer at PALS@PILCH, said: “PILCH is excited to launch this innovative animal law referral service. We recognise the need for animal protection organisations to access high quality, expert legal advice and representation to advance animal welfare through the legal system, including ensuring that existing legal protection mechanisms are enforced through the courts. PALS@PILCH will also undertake policy and law reform work on significant animal welfare issues.”

Hosted at one of Australia’s leading law firms, Mallesons Stephen Jaques, “Animal Law 101” will appeal to anyone keen to learn more about this burgeoning area of advocacy.

Date: 14 May 2009

Time: 6.00pm to 7.30pm

Cost: Free (gold coin donations welcome)

Venue: Mallesons Stephen Jaques, level 50, Bourke Place, 600 Bourke Street, Melbourne.

To register online for this event, please visit: <http://www.pilch.org.au/animallaw101/>

Media contacts

- For interviews with Bruce Wagman or Katrina Sharman, please telephone Voiceless media contacts Elaine Morris on (02) 9357 0773 or 0419 637 036, or Michael Young 0432 169 147. Alternatively contact:
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