

HSUS Pays Circus \$15 Million to Settle Corrupt Organizations and Racketeering (RICO) Suit

Just as the smoke was clearing on the Rotten Egg Bill, the news media reported another major scandal at the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

In the largest forfeiture of its kind in U.S. history, *millions* of charitable dollars that should have been used to protect animals — have instead gone to a circus.

Facing a lawsuit that included charges of bribery, money laundering, and obstruction of justice, HSUS, two of its attorneys, and others have just “settled” a massive Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) lawsuit filed by the owners of Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus.

The millions HSUS lost in this shocking settlement is *in addition* to the funds it squandered during its failed attempts to extricate itself from the RICO charges and from paying the circus’ legal expenses in a related lawsuit. Despite its costly maneuvers, a federal judge firmly *rejected* HSUS’s claim that it shouldn’t be held liable — and the case was moving forward.

HSUS: We Did Nothing Wrong — But Here’s \$15 Million Anyway

HSUS is now trying to convince its outraged donors that its RICO problems are just something it inadvertently inherited when it merged with the Fund for Animals. A federal court didn’t buy that argument, nor should anyone else.

Indeed, among the most damaging evidence was *an HSUS check issued by Wayne Pacelle*. Filtered through an intermediary, his check was allegedly used *to pay a witness who had lied repeatedly under oath*. Ironically, one of the things the witness misled the court about was whether or not he was getting paid.

Despite all of HSUS’s previous talk about vindicating itself in court and never giving the circus “a dime,” Wayne Pacelle and the others ensnared in the RICO case ultimately surrendered — *rather than face testifying under oath*. This surrender took the form of reaching into HSUS’s bank account and *paying off* the circus.

The Right Hand Knows What the Left Hand is Doing



HSUS CEO Wayne Pacelle says the Fund for Animals is to blame for this multi-million dollar payout to the circus. Pacelle fails to mention that *he* is on the Fund’s *board of directors*, serves as its *Vice President*, and is implicated in the witness payments.



HSUS Vice President, Mike Markarian, is best known for being Pacelle’s right-hand man. Markarian also serves as *President* of the Fund for Animals which was accused of illicit witness payments, money laundering, false testimony, and other offenses.



HSUS Vice President, Jon Lovvorn, was *personally* named as a defendant in the RICO case. A central player in the Fund’s legal team, he was directly involved in the witness payments and other acts at the core of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations lawsuit.

Despite this unprecedented forfeiture of charitable funds, as of this writing, all three of these key players maintain their salaries and positions.

RICO Loss Not Covered by Insurance

Once word of this massive loss of charitable funds hit the news, Pacelle began claiming that the RICO case would be covered by insurance. In reality, HSUS’s insurance company had already *denied coverage*. And HSUS had *already* given the circus its multi-million dollar settlement.