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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Assemblymember Kalra, PETA, PCRM and Social Compassion in Legislation, Team Up to Bolster Students' Right to Opt Out of Animal Dissection**

**Sacramento, Calif., March 12, 2024**, Today, **Assembly Member Ash Kalra (D-San Jose)** introduced **AB 2640, The C.L.A.S.S. (Compassionate Learning Advancements for Science Students) Act**, sponsored by **Social Compassion in Legislation, PETA and the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine**. The Class Act will modernize science education in the state of California by requiring teachers to present sourcing and environmental concerns about dissection to students as well as inform them of their right to choose a non-animal replacement. This bill will support more inclusive, trauma-informed classrooms and prevent the needless and agonizing deaths of millions of animals each year.

Dissecting animals is costly, exposes students and educators to carcinogenic chemicals, and hurts the environment. Each year in the U.S., an estimated 10 million animals are killed for dissection. Frogs are taken from the wild (a practice that disrupts ecosystems), fetal piglets are cut from the wombs of their mothers, and cats who end up on dissection trays could be someone's lost companion. Other animals are routinely drowned or suffocated.

"Cutting open animals for cruel and archaic dissection can be traumatizing for compassionate young people and can deter those with ethical objections from pursuing careers in science," says **PETA TeachKind Science Program Manager**

**Samantha Crowe.** “PETA is calling on lawmakers to protect vulnerable students and animals by reinforcing their right to opt for superior, humane, non-animal methods.”

“Dissection is an outdated, dangerous and inhumane practice that California needs to put behind us,” said **Judie Mancuso, Founder and CEO of Social Compassion in Legislation.**

“Digital technologies offer a much better understanding of animal anatomy, and spare children being exposed to formaldehyde, a known carcinogen.

**HR 28, the Humane Education Resolution** sponsored by SCIL in 2015 and adopted with bipartisan support, reminds schools that they are required by law to promote empathy, compassion and respect towards animals in classrooms. Forcing kids to cut animals open does the exact opposite.

There is nothing in current law that requires teaching dissection. It’s an easy choice for schools to transition to an approach that is safe, inexpensive, modern and humane.”

Studies show that students who use non-animal methods (NAM) **perform as well as, if not better than, peers who dissect animals**, according to a systematic review published in **The American Biology Teacher**, a leading, peer-reviewed science-education journal. NAMs—such as **eMind** digital dissection software and synthetic dissectible models—also cut costs and reduce waste. Top academic programs, including the International Baccalaureate, the Next Generation Science Standards (which California adopted in 2013), and the College Board’s Advanced Placement program, don’t require—or even mention—animal dissection in their curricula.

PETA’s humane–science education division, TeachKind Science, works with educators to replace the use of animals in the classroom with **interactive dissection software** and realistic models.