

**Q+A with Genesis Butler:  
Social Compassion in Legislation's Board Member**

**Q: When did you realize animals were important to you?**

A: I realized animals were important to me when I was only three years old. This was when I asked my mom about the food I was eating. I used to eat chicken nuggets all the time and I asked her what I was eating because I wanted to know what it was. She told me it was an animal and once she told me that I told her I never wanted to eat animals again. I felt so sad for the animal and didn't think it was right to eat them.

**Q: Can you share a special animal memory with us?**

A: My special animal memory was actually one of the happiest times of my life! I spoke at Farm Sanctuary for their annual Hoedown event and I got to spend the entire weekend with all of their farmed animals. We stayed in a cottage right on the sanctuary so we were surrounded by animals the whole time. I got to spend hours with the cows and they were my favorite because they are so big but they are really gentle.

**Q: What is your spirit animal and why?**

A: My spirit animal is a pig because I just love their personalities and I can relate to them. They really show their emotions just like I do. You can tell when they just want to be by themselves and relax or if they want to be social. They are so loving!

**Q: How did you first get involved with Social Compassion in Legislation and what is your role as a member of the board?**

A: I first got involved with Social Compassion in Legislation when I was about 10 years old. I spoke with my mom and sister at a Senate hearing Committee to get mandatory plant-based options in prisons, hospitals and nursing homes. My role as a board member is to support the work of SCIL and hopefully when I'm an adult, I can become a politician and help SCIL get laws passed.

**Q: What animal movie is important to you and why?**



A: The One and Only Ivan. This movie is important because it teaches kids that animals shouldn't be held captive just to entertain people. The movie really did a good job showing how animals don't like to be captive and the importance of them living in their natural habitat.

**Q: What is the law you are most proud of passing and why?**

A: SB 1138 because I think it's very important for people to have access to vegan options outside of their home. When my little sister was in the hospital, they only offered her french fries which wasn't a complete meal so she remained hungry. Now that this law has passed, this gives people in hospitals, prisons, and nursing homes more meal options. Especially those who eat plant-based meals will have that option and not have to worry about what they can eat.

**Q: Who inspires you?**

A: Gina Lynn inspires me. She is an animal rescuer who runs New Life Sanctuary. She cares for animals who are freed from laboratories. She inspires me because she has devoted her life to taking care of animals and she does it even when it gets really tough because the animals really mean a lot to her and she wants them to be able to be free and live the rest of their lives in peace.

**Q: How does climate change connect to animal welfare?**

A: Climate change is linked to animal welfare because a massive amount of animals are bred to feed people and this isn't sustainable for the planet. Animal agriculture is causing climate change because there are so many animals that are used for food that are causing a lot of methane to be released. Additionally, forests are being leveled so that animals can graze on this land. We need the trees to help with CO2 absorption to fight climate change, but this isn't happening because we are losing an acre of rainforest every second of the day.

**Q: What would you tell your peers about getting involved and helping to make the planet better?**

A: I would tell them that they're never too young to get involved and make the planet a better place. I'd also tell them they can get involved in politics even if they aren't of voting age and they can do this by sharing bills, signing petitions, and calling their local leaders to ask them to support bills that will help the planet.





**Q: Why is it important that schools offer plant-based food and drinks?**

A: It's necessary for schools to offer plant-based food and drinks because my generation is really starting to understand the negative impact meat and dairy has on the planet. There are so many kids who don't want to eat meat and animal products, so if schools had options for them, it would be so much easier for them to eat plant-based meals. Also, schools should do everything they can to make the world better for future generations and lower their impact on the planet, and one of the best ways to do this is to offer their students plant-based meals and drinks.

**Q: How can people support AB 558 -CA School Plant Based Lunch and Beverage Program?**

A: People can support this bill by calling their local leaders and asking them for their support. They can share their personal stories with them to show them there is a need for plant-based meals in school. They can also share this bill on their social media pages and ask their friends to do the same.

