

Political Prisoner Andy Stepanian

Charges

Andy was sentenced in September of 2006 to three years in a Federal prison after being found guilty of "Conspiracy to Violate the Animal Enterprises Protection Act", the maximum sentence available. The "crimes" that earned him his three year stint were organizing and attending public demonstrations against Huntingdon Life Sciences, an animal testing facility. As an additional punishment, Andy was ordered by the judge to work while in prison with his wages to be garnisheed directly to Huntingdon Life Sciences.



Andy is one of the SHAC 7, a group of animal rights activists associated with the group Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty convicted on various "conspiracy" charges for running a successful and nonviolent campaign against Huntingdon Life Sciences. None of the SHAC 7 have been accused of any acts of vandalism or violence. Instead, their convictions all rest on the nebulous notions of conspiracy and the power of the "Animal Enterprises Protection Act" (now called the "Animal Enterprises Terrorism Act") to criminalize activism based on speech and assembly if it is directed against private enterprises that use animals.

Bio

Andy is a longtime activist from the New York area. In the past he has worked on projects such as raising money for and delivering supplies to victims of Hurricane Katrina, fixing bicycles for underprivileged youth in New York, founding Long Island's "Recycle-a-Bicycle" program, and raising money for cancer patients to seek alternative therapies. Andy was a founder of the Animal Defense League in 1999 and in 2000 was convicted of several minor direct actions claimed on behalf of the Animal Liberation Front. Currently, Andy is working in a volunteer capacity in jail to help prepare fellow prisoners for their GED exams.

Andy likes surfing, the outdoors and music. His favourite bands include Fugazi and Minus the Bear.

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