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The Lei Orelha Bill and the PACT Act

The Lei Orelha Bill

One of the most meaningful outcomes of this movement is the proposal of the "Lei Orelha" bill in Santa Catarina, Brazil. Introduced by State Deputy Mário Motta in direct response to Orelha's death, the bill calls for significantly increased penalties for animal cruelty crimes in the state. It also proposes the creation of a statewide registry of animal abusers, a critical tool for preventing repeat offenders from owning or having access to animals in the future.

Brazil already has the Sansão Law on the books, which increased penalties for cruelty against dogs and cats to 2 to 5 years in prison, along with fines and a lifetime ban on owning animals. The Lei Orelha bill seeks to go further and strengthen enforcement at the state level, where accountability has clearly broken down. The bill has advanced through committee and must continue to move forward. The death of Orelha and the failure of this case to result in any conviction makes its passage not just important. It makes it urgent.

What About the PACT Act?

Many people have asked whether the U.S. federal PACT Act (Prevention of Animal Cruelty and Torture Act) could apply to this case, given that the torture of Orelha was livestreamed on Discord, an American platform.

The concern is understandable and the people raising it are right to be angry. However, the answer is no. The PACT Act does not apply here, and here is why:

- The PACT Act is a U.S. federal law. It applies only when the act of cruelty occurs on U.S. federal property, within U.S. territorial jurisdiction, or in a way that directly affects U.S. interstate or foreign commerce.
- The physical act of cruelty against Orelha occurred entirely in Brazil. That places it outside the reach of U.S. federal law, regardless of where the platform that streamed it is based.
- While the use of a U.S. based platform like Discord to broadcast animal torture is deeply disturbing and warrants its own accountability, the PACT Act targets the act of cruelty itself, not the platform that carried the content.

The people calling for Discord to be held responsible for allowing the livestream are raising a legitimate and separate issue. Platform accountability for hosting and distributing animal cruelty content is a fight

worth having. But it is a different legal battle from the one that was lost in a Santa Catarina courtroom on May 14, 2026.

The bottom line: the PACT Act cannot reach what happened to Orelha. That is exactly why laws like the Lei Orelha bill matter so deeply, and why the fight to strengthen animal cruelty legislation in Brazil must not stop here.

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