



June 5, 2020

The Honorable Ralph Abraham
 U.S. House of Representatives
 417 Cannon HOB
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ted Yoho
 U.S. House of Representatives
 1730 Longworth HOB
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kurt Schrader
 U.S. House of Representatives
 2431 Rayburn HOB
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Abraham, Yoho and Schrader:

We, the undersigned groups, commend you for introducing H.R. 6921, the *Healthy Dog Importation Act*. This bipartisan legislation would ensure all canine imports undergo a thorough health screening in order to verify they are healthy and free of disease and parasites before entering the United States.

For the vast majority of imported dogs, rabies vaccination documentation is the only prerequisite for entering the country. Despite this, in the past five years, we have seen several cases of rabid dogs coming from Egypt, necessitating the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) to suspend all canine imports from Egypt. Furthermore, imported dogs can also carry – and have been documented carrying – other infectious diseases and parasites (e.g. canine influenza, leptospirosis, melioidosis, onchocercosis and screwworm) that pose a severe threat to other companion animals and livestock. According to a 2019 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) report, less than one percent of the roughly one million dogs imported into the U.S. each year are required to undergo examination or provide documentation to the Department demonstrating that they are free of diseases other than rabies.

The risk of disease introduction and transmission is too high under current import regulations. The *Healthy Dog Importation Act* would establish commonsense health and vaccination requirements for all dogs imported into the U.S. and promote interagency coordination to address the current gaps in regulatory authority over such imports.

We thank you for your leadership on this issue and look forward to working together to strengthen our animal import requirements to better protect both animal and public health.

Sincerely,

American Kennel Club

American Pet Products Association

American Sheep Industry Association

American Veterinary Medical Association

Animal Health Institute

National Animal Interest Alliance

National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

North American Veterinary Community

Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council

World Pet Association

cc:

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Chairman
House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable Mike Conaway
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee