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Description of document: Copies of all congressional inquiries regarding the removal of animal welfare data from the Animal and Plant Health Service (APHIS) public website received by APHIS February 1-17, 2017

Requested date: 17-February-2017

Release date: 14-February-2019

Posted date: 25-March-2019

Source of document: FOIA Request
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Director, Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Staff
4700 River Road, Unit 50
Riverdale, MD 20737
Fax: 301-734-5941
[USDA FOIA Public Access Link](#)

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United States Department of Agriculture

February 14, 2019

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Legislative and
Public Affairs

Freedom of
Information

4700 River Road
Unit 50
Riverdale, MD
20737-1232

Re: Final Response to FOIA Request No. 2017-APHIS-2230-F

This is in response to your February 17, 2017, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request which was received in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Service (APHIS) on the same date. Your request was assigned FOIA tracking number 2017-APHIS-2230-F. You requested "copies of all congressional inquiries (inquiries from or forwarded by congressional offices or congressional staff), received by APHIS's Office that handles Congressional Correspondence and/or Congressional Affairs, between February 1, 2017 and February 17, 2017 regarding the removal of animal welfare data from the APHIS public website."

The APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs program conducted an electronic search for responsive records. To locate responsive records, LPA employees searched for mail received from house.gov and senate.gov addresses for responsive records. Moreover, LPA employees conducted an electronic search of their correspondence tracking system for responsive records. Their search located 74 documents which are enclosed. From the enclosures, Exemption 6 of the FOIA was applied in 46 instances where applicable.

FOIA Exemption 6 generally is referred to as the "personal privacy" exemption. It provides that the disclosure requirements of FOIA do not apply to "personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." Application of the exemption involves balancing the public's interest in disclosure against individuals' privacy interests.

The information withheld includes the names, email addresses, and addresses of private individuals who wrote their congressional members. This information falls under the category of "similar files" because it is information in which individuals have a substantial privacy interest. Further disclosing an individual's telephone passcode would afford anyone the opportunity to listen in on private conversations. The release of a signature could cause identity theft since a person uses a signature to attest as to who they are in business and personal records. Moreover, releasing the information could subject these individuals to unwarranted or unsolicited communications.

Since there is a viable privacy interest that would be threatened by the disclosure of this information, FOIA Exemption 6 authorizes this office to withhold these items from release. Accordingly, we have determined that the public interest in the information's release does not outweigh the overriding privacy interests in keeping it confidential.

2017-APHIS-2230

Please note that page 11, in the enclosures, was not redacted by the APHIS FOIA Office.

Reginald Sheppard, the analyst who processed your request, may be contacted at (301) 851-4053 and Mr. James Ivy, our FOIA Public Liaison, may be contacted at (301) 851-4100. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

You have the right to file an administrative appeal by writing to: Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Ag Box 3401, Washington, DC 20250-3401. Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 days of the date of the response to your request. To ensure proper routing of your appeal, please write the words FOIA Appeal, on the outside of the envelope containing your appeal letter. Within your letter, please reference the control number assigned to your request and the reason you believe review of this determination is warranted.

Sincerely,

KATHERINE

VAGNONI

for:

Tonya G. Woods

Director

Freedom of Information & Privacy Act

Legislative and Public Affairs

Digitally signed by
KATHERINE VAGNONI
Date: 2019.02.14 14:46:27
-05'00'

Enclosures

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

000001

February 13, 2017

Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young,

We are writing to express our concern regarding the recent decision by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to remove information from its website related to oversight and enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA), including inspection reports for all regulated entities and annual reports submitted by research laboratories. We are urging the USDA to restore access to this information on its website immediately. For multiple years, APHIS has provided this information to the public, which created an atmosphere of transparency surrounding the accountability and enforcement of animal cruelty laws. The removal of this information could have profound consequences going forward regarding the enforcement of animal cruelty laws nationwide.

Congress passed the AWA and the HPA decades ago and has appropriated tens of millions of dollars to the USDA for enforcement of these laws in recent years. The USDA annually inspects approximately 9,000 licensed facilities including commercial dog and cat breeding facilities, laboratories, zoos, circuses, airlines, Tennessee walking horse shows, and other operations. The work product that USDA employees create through these enforcement programs provides critical information about both compliant and non-compliant licensees. This information is valued by lawmakers; the media; a variety of industries that use animals in commerce, exhibition, and research; the animal welfare community; and the general public.

The public has a right to know if regulated entities have subjected animals in their care to abuse or otherwise failed to meet basic welfare standards. Public access to information can guide consumer decision making and plays an important role in deterring regulated entities from violating the law. For instance, a family will now have difficulty knowing that their family puppy did not come from puppy mill with a long track record of AWA violations. In addition, spectators at horse shows will no longer know if a specific horse trainer has a history of HPA violations. Also, a consumer purchasing cosmetics products will no longer have the certainty of knowing that the product being purchased comes from a company that is fully compliant with the AWA. Furthermore, scientific laboratories, circuses, aquariums, zoos and other for-profit animal businesses will no longer feel the pressure to fully comply with the AWA now that their

violations will no longer be publicly available. These are just a few examples of the impact, intended or unintended, from the USDA's retreat from transparency.

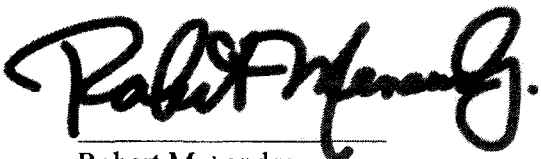
Lack of access to AWA and HPA documents not only undermines the effectiveness of these federal laws, but also interferes with state and local laws meant to protect animals and consumers. For example, seven states currently prohibit the sale of dogs from breeding operations with a history of serious AWA violations. Without ready access to inspection reports, dog sellers in those states will have no practical way to comply with these laws, and state and local law enforcement efforts will be severely impeded.

We would like to know the following:

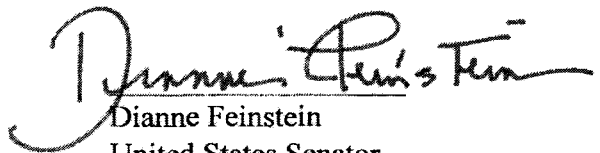
1. What led to the decision to remove this critical information from the USDA's APHIS website and who, specifically within the USDA and elsewhere, was involved with and authorized this decision?
2. The USDA states that courts are continually issuing decisions regarding privacy and this is a reason for the removal of this online information. What court cases, decisions and legal precedent, specifically, is the USDA using to base this decision upon?
3. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests routinely take months and even years to be fulfilled. Why does the USDA believe that a FOIA request is now the best and most transparent method for obtaining information related to violations of the AWA and the HPA; information that was previously readily available?
4. The USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) has previously described APHIS's enforcement of the AWA and HPA as "ineffective" and USDA OIG initiated audits of AWA and HPA enforcement, in part, because the public had access to APHIS's inspection reports and demanded action. With this in mind, does the USDA believe that providing the public with less information will help the USDA to enforce these critical federal animal protection laws?

Again, we hope that the USDA will rethink this decision and immediately restore public access to this information. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from the USDA in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,



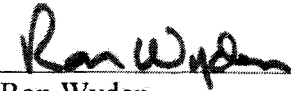
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Richard Durbin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



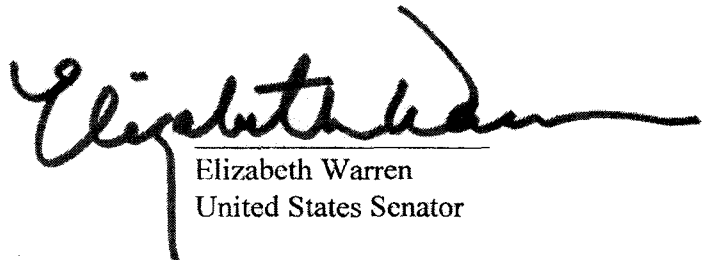
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



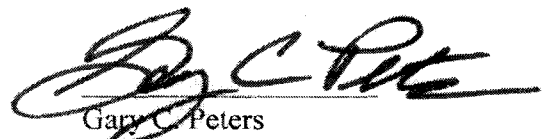
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

From: Shultz, Joe (Agriculture)
To: [Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: APHIS letter
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 6:31:30 PM
Attachments: [2.16.2017 Letter to Deputy Sec. Young.pdf](#)

Hi Abbey,

Please see letter from Ranking Member Stabenow. Happy to answer any questions. My direct is [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

And I understand you're coming to Kansas?

Thanks!

Joe

Joseph A. Shultz
Staff Director
Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI), Ranking Member

U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry

United States Senate

731 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2204

February 16, 2017

Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young,

I am writing to express my concern about the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) actions on February 3, 2017, to remove information regarding enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA) from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website. The documents that USDA removed contained important information about enforcement of and compliance with animal welfare laws in the 8,000 licensed U.S. facilities that use animals, including commercial dog breeding facilities, animal research laboratories, animals in zoos and aquariums, and Tennessee Walking horse exhibitors. Specifically, the types of documents removed included facility inspection reports, lists of regulated entities, enforcement records, and research facility annual reports. Such information had been publicly posted on APHIS's website for years. The information was a valuable resource to provide transparency into USDA's enforcement of these important animal welfare laws and allowed the public to see cases of abuse and mistreatment of animals.

Given this action to remove information was made with no warning and little explanation, many questions have surfaced. I ask that you provide me with a written response to the following questions no later than March 1, 2017.

1. Please provide me with a detailed list of all information USDA removed from the APHIS's website related to the AWA and HPA. Describe the entire basis for USDA's decision to remove the information. Who made the decision to remove this information? Was this decision made solely by APHIS or were other Administration officials involved in making this decision?
2. Why did USDA decide now to remove this information even though it had long been previously been posted on the USDA's website?
3. Is it USDA's position that any laws or regulations required the removal of enforcement information for the AWA and HPA? Please provide any such legal basis for each type of information removed from the website.
4. Did any administration policy changes require the removal of this information? If so, please provide such policies.
5. The Freedom of Information Act requires the public disclosure of certain information. For example, section 552 requires making available documents "likely to become subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records." Given that these

types of records have been used for years by animal welfare groups and others, do you believe removal of these records violates this provision of the Freedom of Information Act?

6. APHIS stated that those seeking information related to AWA and HPA should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Generally, it takes a long time to get responses to FOIA requests. What alternative methods will USDA commit to use to make the types of documents that USDA recently removed from APHIS's website available in a timely fashion?

If your staff has questions regarding this letter, please have them contact Mary Beth Schultz on the minority staff of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at (202) 224-2035.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Debbie Stabenow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member

From: Sackett, Donna (Lee)
To: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: FW: USDA APHIS website taken offline - this threatens my job
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 4:36:19 PM
Attachments: [2016-05-06 USDA Inspection.pdf](#)

Hello Abbey,

I just spoke to David at Congressional Affairs and he suggested I contact you regarding this message.

[REDACTED] is very concerned about the APHIS website and not being able to access information for his research. I would appreciate your review of the situation to determine the status of website and what information I can pass on.

Thank you for your help! I look forward to hearing from you.

Donna

Donna Sackett
Constituent Services Liaison
Office of Senator Mike Lee
125 South State Street, Suite 4225
Salt Lake City, UT 84138
donna_sackett@lee.senate.gov
[REDACTED] – direct
(801) 524-5933 – office
(801) 524-5730 – fax

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Date: Friday, February 3, 2017 at 12:59 PM
To: Sally Mero <Sally_Mero@lee.senate.gov>
Cc: Donna Sackett <donna_sackett@lee.senate.gov>
Subject: Re: USDA APHIS website taken offline - this threatens my job

Thank you Sally.

I can't believe APHIS took this step without any warning. Stakeholders must be consulted before action like this is taken. This is reckless governance that is going to impact a lot of people's lives.

The records were already redacted pursuant to FOIA's privacy exemptions. I've attached an example to this email of what these inspection reports look like. As you can see, names of individuals' associated with the regulated entity are redacted under exemptions (6) and (7)(c).

Not only does this abrupt change threaten my livelihood, I can't imagine how this move is in the public interest.

On Feb 3, 2017, at 12:50 PM, Mero, Sally (Lee) <Sally_Mero@lee.senate.gov> wrote:

I have included Donna Sackett on this email as she is our liaison who works with issues regarding the Department of Agriculture. She is familiar with APHIS and would be happy to speak with you about your concerns. You may contact Donna directly at Donna_Sackett@lee.senate.gov, or by calling our office at 801-524-5933.

Respectfully,

Sally Mero - Executive Assistant/Scheduler
United States Senator Mike Lee (Utah)
125 S. State Street, Suite 4225
Salt Lake City, UT 84138
801-524-5933
sally_mero@lee.senate.gov

From: [REDACTED] >
Date: Friday, February 3, 2017 at 11:44 AM
To: "Mero, Sally (Lee)" <sally_mero@lee.senate.gov>
Subject: USDA APHIS website taken offline - this threatens my job

Hi Sally,

I need to meet with someone in Senator Lee's office about a deeply troubling development. USDA-Animal Plant Health Inspection Service has just taken down literally tens of thousands of records related to the enforcement of the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. This database formerly existed at this URL:

<https://acis.aphis.usda.gov/ords/f?p=116:1:1335681112230>

As you can see, there is now a notice stating that the database has been taken down based on the agency's "commitment to being transparent." Orwell would be proud.

I have worked for non-profit animal welfare organizations now for 7 years, and currently am the Research Specialist for Beagle Freedom Project. I want to be clear here: THIS IS MY LIVELIHOOD. THIS IS MY JOB. I use this data on a daily basis as part of my normal tasks of employment. This database contained basic information about regulated entities, including

reports of violations, statistical information regarding the numbers of animals used in research and testing, and other federal enforcement records. I use this data to assist in nearly all of our organization's efforts, including our lobbying work, advocacy materials, and in working with laboratories to facilitate rescue of animals.

If this database remains offline, my job might become obsolete. I'm terrified.

This is not a partisan issue for me. This database was online during the Bush years, as well.

This database needs to go back online soon or I might be on unemployment. I'm scared, please help!

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Inspection Report

University Of Utah
Office Of Comparative Medicine
75 South 2000 East, Suite 311
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Customer ID: 12
Certificate: 87-R-0001
Site: 003
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Type: ROUTINE INSPECTION
Date: Apr-26-2016

2.32 (a)

PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS.

In August 2015, a cynomolgus macaque placed under anesthesia for a study procedure was observed to have a low body temperature. In order to normalize the animal's core temperature during the procedure, a staff member was directed by a veterinarian to use a hot air source; however, the nozzle of this hot air source was inappropriately placed in a location which subsequently led to thermal injuries and later, euthanasia.

It is the responsibility of the research facility to ensure that all scientists, research technicians, animal technicians, and other personnel involved in animal care, treatment, and use are qualified to perform necessary or directed duties. This responsibility shall be fulfilled in part through the provision of training and appropriate instruction to those personnel.

Corrective measures were taken, including but not limited to, retraining of all involved staff and observation of techniques by veterinary staff.

This item has been corrected by the facility.

2.33 (b) (2)

ATTENDING VETERINARIAN AND ADEQUATE VETERINARY CARE.

Review of facility records for a cynomolgus macaque which was euthanized in August 2015 due to complications resulting from an approved procedure indicate that the animal did not receive adequate veterinary care during this procedure.

According to anesthesia records, there was a period of over 30 minutes in which no temperature was recorded while the animal was under anesthesia for this procedure. This is contrary to the approved protocol which states that a rectal temperature will be continuously monitored under anesthesia. By monitoring the temperature at more frequent intervals, changes in temperature may be identified and addressed sooner. Records indicate that the warming blanket used to maintain body temperature during anesthesia had not been turned on by the veterinary team. Subsequently, the veterinarian authorized the use of a hot air source in an attempt to raise the animal's body temperature; however the source was

Prepared By:

TYLER FIELDS, V.M.O.

TYLER W FIELDS, V.M.O. USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

Title: VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICER Inspector 6082

Date:
May-06-2016

Received By:

(b)(6),(b)(7)(c)

Title:

Date:
May-06-2016

Inspection Report

inappropriately placed by a staff member and led to thermal injuries to the animal.

A review of this adverse event indicates that although a clinical veterinarian was present during the procedure, there was a failure of appropriate communication and oversight. The result led to the inappropriate placement of a hot air source by an individual staff member and subsequent animal injury severe enough that euthanasia was warranted.

Failure to provide animals with appropriate methods of veterinary care and oversight during approved procedures may cause unnecessary pain and distress to the animal.

Each research facility shall establish and maintain programs of adequate veterinary care that include the availability and use of appropriate methods to prevent, control, diagnose, and treat diseases and injuries to the animals.

The research facility acted promptly to address this incident by conducting a thorough investigation, self-reporting the incident, and swiftly implementing appropriate corrective actions to prevent future occurrences. Corrective actions provided retraining of all personnel involved in the procedure including monitoring associated with this protocol.

This item has been corrected by the facility.

This inspection was conducted on 04/26/2016 and 04/27/2016.

Exit interview was conducted with a facility representative.

Prepared By:	TYLER FIELDS, V.M.O.	
Title:	TYLER W FIELDS, V.M.O. USDA, APHIS, Animal Care	Date: May-06-2016
Received By:	(b) (6), (b) (7) (c)	
Title:		Date: May-06-2016

From: Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture)
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS; Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information
Date: Monday, February 06, 2017 11:20:18 AM

Morning—

Do you have any further background you can share on this? I've noticed all the media about the announcement, and I could see it coming up in the confirmation hearing.

Chelsie Keys
202-224-2035

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:01 PM
To: Straughn, Patricia <Patricia.Straughn@mail.house.gov>; Wedig, Mykel <Mykel.Wedig@mail.house.gov>; Crosswhite, Caleb <Caleb.Crosswhite@mail.house.gov>; mary.knigge@mail.house.gov; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture) <Wayne_Stoskopf@ag.senate.gov>; Olive, Mary (Agriculture) <Mary_Olive@ag.senate.gov>; Colvin, Grant (Agriculture) <Grant_Colvin@ag.senate.gov>; Varner, Kyle (Agriculture) <Kyle_Varner@ag.senate.gov>; O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>; 'martha.foley@mail.house.gov' <martha.foley@mail.house.gov>; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; Ross, Bob (Appropriations) <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>
Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika - APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS <Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Hello,

At 1 p.m. today, APHIS will be announcing changes to its website and how it shares certain information involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. More information about these actions are in the stakeholder announcement we'll be issuing later, and in the attached Q&A document.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

**Updates to APHIS' Website Involving
Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act**

Compliance Information

For more than a decade, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has shared information on its website concerning its administration of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA). This information includes inspection reports, research facility annual reports, and lists of persons licensed and registered under the AWA, as well as lists of persons licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations and associations (HIOs) to inspect horses for compliance with the HPA. More recently, APHIS also began posting AWA and HPA regulatory correspondence and enforcement-related information to its website for the general public to view.

APHIS, during the past year, has conducted a comprehensive review of the information it posts on its website for the general public to view. As a result of the comprehensive review, APHIS has implemented actions to remove certain personal information from documents it posts on APHIS' website involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Going forward, APHIS will remove from its website inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, research facility annual reports, and enforcement records that have not received final adjudication. APHIS will also review and redact, as necessary, the lists of licensees and registrants under the AWA, as well as lists of designated qualified persons (DQPs) licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations.

Those seeking information from APHIS regarding inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, and enforcement records should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for that information. Records will be released when authorized and in a manner consistent with the FOIA and Privacy Act. If the same records are frequently requested via the FOIA process, in most instances APHIS may post the appropriately redacted versions to its website. In addition, some enforcement records (such as initial decision and orders, default decisions, and consent decisions) will continue to be available on the USDA's Office of Administrative Law Judge's website (<http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov>).

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From: Foley, Martha
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS; Straughn, Patricia; Wedig, Mykel; Crosswhite, Caleb; Knigge, Mary; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov); Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture); mary_olive@ag.senate.gov; "grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov"; kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov; O'Brien, Tom; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov); "Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov"
Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC; Whittington, Tanika - APHIS; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:48:54 PM

Interesting in light of the fact that AC took down the website and completely revamped it to make it much more easily searched.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:44 PM
To: Straughn, Patricia <Patricia.Straughn@mail.house.gov>; Wedig, Mykel <Mykel.Wedig@mail.house.gov>; Crosswhite, Caleb <Calëb.Crosswhite@mail.house.gov>; Knigge, Mary <Mary.Knigge@mail.house.gov>; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture) <Wayne_Stoskopf@ag.senate.gov>; mary_olive@ag.senate.gov; 'grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov' <grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov>; kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov; O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>; Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; 'Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov' <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>
Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika - APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS <Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Hi all –

APHIS is updating its statement from last week about changes the agency is making about how it shares certain animal welfare information on the agency's website. We've added a new sentence to provide additional context around the decision. I've pasted that below. The original statement can be found on the APHIS website, and will be updated soon with the new language.. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Editor's Note (Revised Feb. 7, 2017) The review of APHIS' website has been ongoing, and the agency is striving to balance the need for transparency with rules protecting individual privacy. In 2016, well before the change of Administration, APHIS decided to make adjustments to the posting of regulatory records. In addition, APHIS is currently involved in litigation concerning, among other issues, information posted on the agency's website. While the agency is vigorously defending against this litigation, in an abundance of caution, the agency is taking additional measures to protect individual privacy. These decisions are not final. Adjustments may be made regarding information appropriate for release and posting.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:01 PM
To: 'Straughn, Patricia' <Patricia.Straughn@mail.house.gov>; 'Wedig, Mykel' <Mykel.Wedig@mail.house.gov>; 'Crosswhite, Caleb' <Caleb.Crosswhite@mail.house.gov>; mary.knigge@mail.house.gov; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; 'Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture)' <Wayne_Stoskopf@ag.senate.gov>; 'mary_olive@ag.senate.gov' <mary_olive@ag.senate.gov>; 'grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov' <grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov>; 'kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov' <kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov>; 'O'Brien, Tom' <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>; 'martha.foley@mail.house.gov' <martha.foley@mail.house.gov>; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; 'Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov' <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>
Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika - APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS <Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Hello,

At 1 p.m. today, APHIS will be announcing changes to its website and how it shares certain information involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. More information about these actions are in the stakeholder announcement we'll be issuing later, and in the attached Q&A document.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

**Updates to APHIS' Website Involving
Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act
Compliance Information**

For more than a decade, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has shared information on its website concerning its administration of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA). This information includes inspection reports, research facility annual reports, and lists of persons licensed and registered under the AWA, as well as lists of persons licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations and associations (HIOs) to inspect horses for compliance with the HPA. More recently, APHIS also began posting AWA and HPA regulatory correspondence and enforcement-related information to its website for the general public to view.

APHIS, during the past year, has conducted a comprehensive review of the information it posts on its website for the general public to view. As a result of the comprehensive review, APHIS has implemented actions to remove certain personal information from documents it posts on APHIS' website involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Going forward, APHIS will remove from its website inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, research facility annual reports, and enforcement records that have not received final adjudication. APHIS will also review and redact, as necessary, the lists of licensees and registrants under the AWA, as well as lists of designated qualified persons (DQPs) licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations.

Those seeking information from APHIS regarding inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, and enforcement records should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for that information. Records will be released when authorized and in a manner consistent with the FOIA and Privacy Act. If the same records are frequently requested via the FOIA process, in most instances APHIS may post the appropriately redacted versions to its website. In addition, some enforcement records (such as initial decision and orders, default decisions, and consent decisions) will continue to be available on the USDA's Office of Administrative Law Judge's website (<http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov>).

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From: Foley, Martha
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:27:32 PM

Well, I assumed it was effective at 1PM.

I will need cached versions of everything that was on the website as of whenever it was taken down.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:27 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Yes, the plan was to remove the material and announce it in the same day.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:22 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Apparently those changes have already taken place???

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:15 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Will do. I'll be in touch.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:13 PM

To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Can you check with Bernadette and give me times she is available?

I am relatively open.

Thx.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:12 PM

To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

I can work to set something up. When would be a good time for you?

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:09 PM

To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

I am not happy with this.

Will need a briefing.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:01 PM

To: Straughn, Patricia <Patricia.Straughn@mail.house.gov>; Wedig, Mykel <Mykel.Wedig@mail.house.gov>; Crosswhite, Caleb <Caleb.Crosswhite@mail.house.gov>; Knigge, Mary <Mary.Knigge@mail.house.gov>; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture) <Wayne_Stoskopf@ag.senate.gov>; mary_olive@ag.senate.gov; 'grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov' <grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov>; kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov; O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>; Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; 'Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov' <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>

Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika -

APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS
<Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act
Compliance Information

Hello,

At 1 p.m. today, APHIS will be announcing changes to its website and how it shares certain information involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. More information about these actions are in the stakeholder announcement we'll be issuing later, and in the attached Q&A document.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

For more than a decade, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has shared information on its website concerning its administration of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA). This information includes inspection reports, research facility annual reports, and lists of persons licensed and registered under the AWA, as well as lists of persons licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations and associations (HIOs) to inspect horses for compliance with the HPA. More recently, APHIS also began posting AWA and HPA regulatory correspondence and enforcement-related information to its website for the general public to view.

APHIS, during the past year, has conducted a comprehensive review of the information it posts on its website for the general public to view. As a result of the comprehensive review, APHIS has implemented actions to remove certain personal information from documents it posts on APHIS' website involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Going forward, APHIS will remove from its website inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, research facility annual reports, and enforcement records that have not received final adjudication. APHIS will also review and redact, as necessary, the lists of licensees and registrants under the AWA, as well as lists of designated qualified persons (DQPs) licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations.

Those seeking information from APHIS regarding inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, and enforcement records should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for that information. Records will be released when authorized and in a manner consistent with the FOIA and Privacy Act. If the same records are frequently requested via the FOIA process, in most instances APHIS may post the appropriately redacted versions to its

website. In addition, some enforcement records (such as initial decision and orders, default decisions, and consent decisions) will continue to be available on the USDA's Office of Administrative Law Judge's website (<http://www.oaljdecisions.dm.usda.gov>).

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From: Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture)
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: FYI
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 12:15:55 PM

I'm pretty sure the animal welfare groups have issued some sort of action alert RE your website changes. I've heard from several offices that have been getting a ton of calls. Just wanted to tip you off!

Chelsie Keys
Senior Professional Staff
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS)
202-224-2035

From: O'Brien, Tom
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:18:16 PM

Chris,

That is my fault. I originally asked for today, but I now see that you suggested tomorrow at 1:00PM. I will join the call tomorrow then.

Thank you,
Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:16 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: Re: APHIS Meeting

Hey Tom -- sorry for the confusion but I had this down for Wednesday. Will that work for you?

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 7, 2017, at 1:13 PM, O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov> wrote:

Let us know when you are ready. Thanks

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 12:22 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

Here's the conference line for tomorrow:

Phone: 888-844-9904
Access Code: 9730358

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: O'Brien, Tom [<mailto:Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 10:09 AM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Sure. For this briefing, a conference call is fine. I will ask Pam Miller of our staff to join me. Thanks, Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 10:04 AM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: Re: APHIS Meeting

If you're ok with the phone, that probably works best.

I can send around a line later this morning.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 7, 2017, at 10:02 AM, O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov> wrote:

Chris,
1:00 PM will work. Are you up on the Hill or did you want to do the brief by phone?

Thanks, Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 9:12 AM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

Would Wednesday at 1 work?
Otherwise, we're pretty flexible on Thursday, aside from 10-11 and 2:30 to 3:30.

Let me know what works.

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: O'Brien, Tom [mailto:Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2017 2:24 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
<Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Thanks Chris

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2017 2:05 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

I heard from Abbey that you had requested a briefing on the recent AWA/Privacy Act announcement. I'm working to ID a few times for Kevin Shea and OGC to speak with you. I'll be in touch soon.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

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From: Foley, Martha
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: Re: AWA licensees/registrants
Date: Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:31:34 AM

Sorry - I don't need 65. I need the complaint, the US response and any substantive pleadings by the plaintiff and defendant.

From: Foley, Martha
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 09:26 AM
To: 'Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov' <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: Re: AWA licensees/registrants

I don't have any questions. I want to read the pleadings. Can you have her send them to you and forward to me? Thanks.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 09:04 AM
To: Foley, Martha
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

Hi Martha,

The citation for the case is Contender Farms, LLP, et al. v. USDA, No. 4:16-cv-00163(N.D. TX).

I understand that there have been about 65 filings in the case.

Since it is ongoing litigation, any specific questions about the litigation will be best directed to DOJ.
The contact there is:

Nicole Navas
Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs
202-514-2007
nnavas@jmd.usdoj.gov

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 9:50 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

Thanks. The pleadings are public records....

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 3:02 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

We're working on all the ARS reports now. You should have those relatively soon.

I'll check on the pleadings issue, and be in touch.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 2:49 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

Ok. I need the pre-compliance and unannounced inspections of ARS and collocated facilities that have not been sent to me.

I also want the pleadings in whatever case or cases seems to have prompted taking down the website.

Thanks!

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 2:47 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

Hi Martha,

Yes, that list is as of the year end. They're developing a process to update it regularly.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 5:47 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: AWA licensees/registrants

Thanks!

It looks like this is as of 12/29/2016, not current?

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 4:51 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Cc: Shea, Kevin - APHIS <Kevin.A.Shea@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: AWA licensees/registrants

Hi Martha,

As Kevin mentioned, we do now have a list of licensees and registrants on the APHIS website. It's an excel file posted to this page:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/sa_awa/ct_awa_regulated_businesses

Here is a [direct link to the file](#).

I'll check in with Animal Care on your question about the ARS inspection reports.

If you need other information tonight, please let me know.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

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From: Schloeder, Jo
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: APHIS Data
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:15:09 PM

In general, how long would it take to get an APHIS report on a dog breeder, for instance?

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 2:39 PM
To: Schloeder, Jo
Subject: RE: APHIS Data

It would be hard to give an estimate because it would depend on the types and volume of information requested.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Schloeder, Jo [<mailto:Jo.Schloeder@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 2:13 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Data

Thank you for your response. Please advise how long the FOIA process takes in this case.
Thanks again

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:51 AM
To: Schloeder, Jo
Subject: RE: APHIS Data

Hi Jo,

We understand your constituents' concern on this issue. Last week, we announced the removal of certain animal welfare information from the APHIS website, to include those inspection reports you mentioned. [The announcement on our website](#) has more information about the decision.

With respect to your specific questions, the decision was part of a process through which we will evaluate which information we can repost and in which forms to comply with the needs to balance public transparency on animal welfare needs with requirements to protect personal privacy. We do anticipate being able to put some information back on that does not contain personal privacy information and that we may be able to publish others once they have been sufficiently redacted to remove personal information.

We encourage those that would like the information to request those documents through the FOIA process: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/foia/ct_how_to_submit_a_foia_request

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know. Thanks!

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:44 AM

To: Schloeder, Jo <Jo.Schloeder@mail.house.gov>

Cc: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: Re: APHIS Data

Hi Jo,

I hope this finds you well. I am looping my APHIS colleague Chris who can explain the situation.

Best,
Abbey

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 14, 2017, at 10:39 AM, Schloeder, Jo <Jo.Schloeder@mail.house.gov> wrote:

Dear Ms. Fretz,

I left you a voice mail earlier today. I reach out to you today on behalf of Mr. Smith regarding a question that was posed constituents. He has received emails regarding the shutdown of the USDA database of breeder inspection reports (APHIS). This is particularly alarming to constituents who rely on the USDA information to make an informed buying choice when choosing breeders. Additionally, New Jersey's Pet Purchase Protection Act ensures that NJ consumers would have easy access to breeder information provided by the pet stores. However, with the USDA database unavailable, they fear that the info must now be FOIA'd, taking weeks or months. For someone who may be in the process of acquiring a family pet, this is a long time.

Can you tell me if this shut down is permanent or temporary. During the shutdown of the database, how would constituents or the Congressman access this information? I would appreciate any information you may be able to provide.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Jo Schloeder

Jo Smith Schloeder, District Director

Representative Chris Smith – NJ-04

FREEHOLD DISTRICT OFFICE

112 Village Center Drive – 2 fl. (Raintree Plaza)

Freehold, NJ 07728

Voice – 732-780-3035

Fax – 732-780-3079

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE

2373 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

202-225-3765

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From: Foley, Martha
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
Subject: Wanted to make sure you saw this in response to the suggestion APHIS has made that there was a decision to do this before 1/20/17 - from Washington Post
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 3:33:25 PM

Former Agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack said Tuesday that his senior staff informed him toward the end of his term that the agency division responsible for enforcing the Horse Protection and Animal Welfare acts was recommending pulling the records from the website and instead making them available via Freedom of Information Act requests. He said one rationale was that doing so would reduce staff time spent on the documents. Litigation was also a factor, he added, though he could not recall a specific court case.

But Vilsack did not sign off on the recommendation — not because he disagreed with it but because he believed it had major implications that he didn't have time to consider fully, he said. "There was not enough time for us to properly vet the recommendation, and I was concerned about transparency," he explained.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2017/02/09/usda-animal-welfare-records-purge-may-have-been-triggered-by-horse-industry-lawsuit/?utm_term=.df6d24c1a249

From: Leazes, Dylan (Reed)
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: Question regarding USDA APHIS Website
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 11:22:20 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Hello Chris,

Thanks for explaining the situation to me the other day, I appreciate the help.

We want to reach out to our constituents who have contacted us about this and I was wondering if you would be able to provide a written explanation from USDA? We are hoping we can just have something official in writing from USDA explaining the agency's reasoning. If you could do this how long would it take to get the letter to me (PDF version)?

Thanks and feel free to call at [REDACTED]

Thanks.
Dylan

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2017 1:19 PM
To: Leazes, Dylan (Reed) <Dylan_Leazes@reed.senate.gov>
Subject: RE: Question regarding USDA APHIS Website

Hi Dylan,

We published information about the decision to remove certain animal welfare information from our website on our website, [at this link](#). We also published a [Q&A document](#) with more information about the decision.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about it.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 1:08 PM
To: Leazes, Dylan (Reed) <Dylan_Leazes@reed.senate.gov>
Cc: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Question regarding USDA APHIS Website

Hi Dylan,

Thanks for reaching out. Chris Needham has been working closely on this issue and will provide you that information.

Best,
Abbey

Abbey L. Fretz
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
(202) 720-9962

From: Leazes, Dylan (Reed) [mailto:Dylan_Leazes@reed.senate.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 12:56 PM
To: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: Question regarding USDA APHIS Website

Hello Ms. Fretz,

My name is Dylan Leazes, I work for Senator Reed. Our office has many constituents who have written in with concerns about information regarding the AWA and Horse Protection act missing or being removed from the USDA APHIS Website.

I was hoping you can provide me with some information regarding the decision to remove the information. You can reach me by email or at [REDACTED]

Thank you in advance for your help, and I look forward to hearing from you,
Dylan Leazes

Office of U.S. Senator Jack Reed
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4642



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From: Foley, Martha
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: Not trying to pile on, I swear...
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 12:37:21 PM

Thank you.

As Secretary Vilsack told the Post and as I have confirmed personally with senior officials, the reason for not going forward was not the press of business but the determination that it had not be properly vetted.

What did you do that made us aware of the decision before it was implemented?

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 10:18 AM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: Not trying to pile on, I swear...

Hi Martha,

On your mediation question: We are not currently in mediation. We are in direct discussions with the plaintiffs about the issues in the case without a mediator. The parties jointly filed an extension which was granted (see attached) that allows us the opportunity to engage directly before any potential mediation would begin.

On your question about decisionmaking, here's Kevin Shea's response, which he asked me to pass along to you.

"I made the decision well before January 20 and I understood the delay in implementing it to be due to an overload of announcements of actions that were made over the last few weeks of the previous Administration. We wanted to make sure that stakeholders, including the appropriate congressional committees, were aware of the decision before it was implemented. In late January I informed the Acting Deputy Secretary of my decision and he concurred that we could proceed to implement the decision."

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 4:42 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Not trying to pile on, I swear...

Also, the WP said the case is in mediation. Is that true?

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2017/02/09/usda-animal-welfare-records-purge-may-have-been-triggered-by-horse-industry-lawsuit/?utm_term=.df6d24c1a249

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 5:40 PM

To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>

Subject: RE: Not trying to pile on, I swear...

OK, let me check on this. I'll be in touch.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 5:39 PM

To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Not trying to pile on, I swear...

I do need an answer to this.

Thanks!

From: Foley, Martha

Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:18 PM

To: 'Needham, Christopher M - APHIS' <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: Not trying to pile on, I swear...

...but I want to know who at USDA, above APHIS, approved the APHIS decision to remove the materials from the website?

Thanks.

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From: Foley, Martha
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
Subject: Re: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act Compliance Information
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 12:06:01 PM

What time will this be announced?

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 12:02 PM
To: Straughn, Patricia; Wedig, Mykel; Crosswhite, Caleb; Knigge, Mary; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; mary_olive@ag.senate.gov <mary_olive@ag.senate.gov>; anthony_seiler@ag.senate.gov <anthony_seiler@ag.senate.gov>; 'grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov' <grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov>; kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov <kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov>; O'Brien, Tom; Foley, Martha; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; 'Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov' <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>
Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika - APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS <Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act Compliance Information

Hello,

Later today, APHIS will post the first batch of animal welfare reports relating to certain institutions and Federal Research facilities, an initial result of the ongoing comprehensive review of agency documents that were removed in early February. Our intent is to balance the needs to protect personal privacy with our desire for transparency. The reports will be reposted here:
https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/SA_Obtain_Research_Facility_Annual_Report

Below, I've pasted a copy of the announcement we'll be issuing at 1 today.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act Compliance Information

Today, APHIS is posting the first batch of annual reports of research institutions and inspection reports for certain Federal research facilities that the Agency regulates under the Animal Welfare Act. The reports posted are part of a comprehensive review of the documents the Agency removed from its website in early February and are in the same redacted form as before.

To conduct the review, the entire agency search tool database was taken off line. As announced on Feb. 7, 2017, the agency will continue to review records and determine which information is appropriate for reposting.

APHIS is committed to ensuring the welfare of animals and continues to carry out the critical

day-to-day work of ensuring the humane treatment of vulnerable animals through unannounced inspections, pre-compliance visits, horse protection inspections, and other activities.

The reposted information can be found on our website, here: (insert weblink). In addition, some enforcement records (such as initial decision and orders, default decisions, and consent decisions) will continue to be available on the USDA's Office of Administrative Law Judge's website (<https://www.oalidecisions.dm.usda.gov/>).

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United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

000041

February 13, 2017

Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young,

We are writing to express our concern regarding the recent decision by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to remove information from its website related to oversight and enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA), including inspection reports for all regulated entities and annual reports submitted by research laboratories. We are urging the USDA to restore access to this information on its website immediately. For multiple years, APHIS has provided this information to the public, which created an atmosphere of transparency surrounding the accountability and enforcement of animal cruelty laws. The removal of this information could have profound consequences going forward regarding the enforcement of animal cruelty laws nationwide.

Congress passed the AWA and the HPA decades ago and has appropriated tens of millions of dollars to the USDA for enforcement of these laws in recent years. The USDA annually inspects approximately 9,000 licensed facilities including commercial dog and cat breeding facilities, laboratories, zoos, circuses, airlines, Tennessee walking horse shows, and other operations. The work product that USDA employees create through these enforcement programs provides critical information about both compliant and non-compliant licensees. This information is valued by lawmakers; the media; a variety of industries that use animals in commerce, exhibition, and research; the animal welfare community; and the general public.

The public has a right to know if regulated entities have subjected animals in their care to abuse or otherwise failed to meet basic welfare standards. Public access to information can guide consumer decision making and plays an important role in deterring regulated entities from violating the law. For instance, a family will now have difficulty knowing that their family puppy did not come from puppy mill with a long track record of AWA violations. In addition, spectators at horse shows will no longer know if a specific horse trainer has a history of HPA violations. Also, a consumer purchasing cosmetics products will no longer have the certainty of knowing that the product being purchased comes from a company that is fully compliant with the AWA. Furthermore, scientific laboratories, circuses, aquariums, zoos and other for-profit animal businesses will no longer feel the pressure to fully comply with the AWA now that their

violations will no longer be publicly available. These are just a few examples of the impact, intended or unintended, from the USDA's retreat from transparency.

Lack of access to AWA and HPA documents not only undermines the effectiveness of these federal laws, but also interferes with state and local laws meant to protect animals and consumers. For example, seven states currently prohibit the sale of dogs from breeding operations with a history of serious AWA violations. Without ready access to inspection reports, dog sellers in those states will have no practical way to comply with these laws, and state and local law enforcement efforts will be severely impeded.

We would like to know the following:

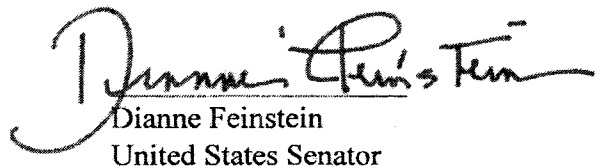
1. What led to the decision to remove this critical information from the USDA's APHIS website and who, specifically within the USDA and elsewhere, was involved with and authorized this decision?
2. The USDA states that courts are continually issuing decisions regarding privacy and this is a reason for the removal of this online information. What court cases, decisions and legal precedent, specifically, is the USDA using to base this decision upon?
3. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests routinely take months and even years to be fulfilled. Why does the USDA believe that a FOIA request is now the best and most transparent method for obtaining information related to violations of the AWA and the HPA; information that was previously readily available?
4. The USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) has previously described APHIS's enforcement of the AWA and HPA as "ineffective" and USDA OIG initiated audits of AWA and HPA enforcement, in part, because the public had access to APHIS's inspection reports and demanded action. With this in mind, does the USDA believe that providing the public with less information will help the USDA to enforce these critical federal animal protection laws?

Again, we hope that the USDA will rethink this decision and immediately restore public access to this information. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from the USDA in a timely fashion.

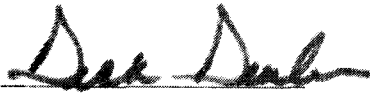
Sincerely,



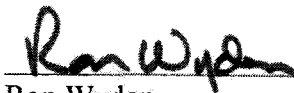
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Richard Durbin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



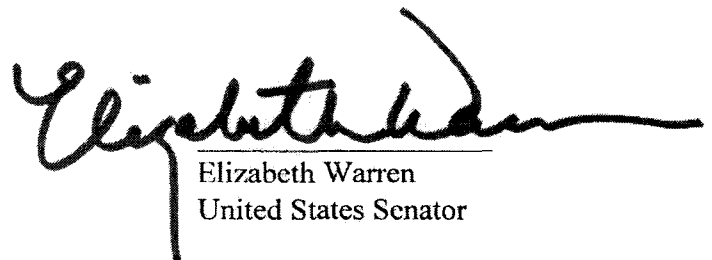
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



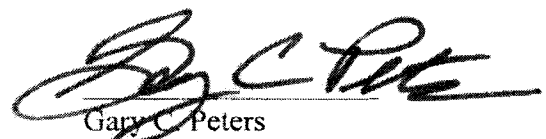
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



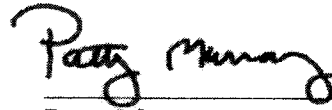
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



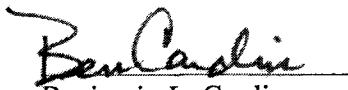
Patty Murray
United States Senator



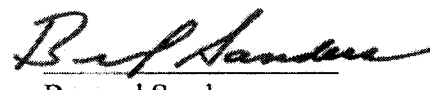
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing today in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) decision to remove from its website key documents regarding enforcement and oversight of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA), including inspection reports for all regulated entities and annual reports submitted by research laboratories.

We join a broad coalition of organizations — from animal welfare groups to pet store chains, biomedical research groups, and accredited zoos and aquariums — in urging the agency to restore comprehensive online, searchable access to these documents immediately in order to maintain ongoing transparency.

Congress passed the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act decades ago, and in recent years Congress has provided tens of millions of dollars for enforcement of these laws. USDA annually inspects approximately 9,000 licensed facilities including commercial dog and cat breeding facilities, laboratories, zoos, circuses, airlines, Tennessee walking horse shows, and other operations. The work product of USDA employees executing these enforcement programs — invaluable information about both compliant and non-compliant licensees — is valued by lawmakers; the media; a variety of industries that use animals in commerce, exhibition, and research; the animal welfare community; and the general public. These are two of our nation's most important and broadly supported animal welfare programs.

The public has a right to know if regulated entities have subjected animals in their care to abuse or otherwise failed to meet basic welfare standards. Public access to information can guide consumer decision-making and plays an important role in deterring regulated entities from violating the law. Public release of inspection reports and laboratory annual reports increases pressure on entities to abide by the rules.

Access to these records has enabled the public to learn about many animal-care violations including by puppy mills, roadside zoos, and training barns engaged in cruel horse soring. It has also provided accountability for research facilities that violate the law, and allowed assessment of how many animals are used (often with taxpayer funding) for research that causes unrelieved pain.

Lack of access to AWA and HPA documents not only undermines these federal laws, but also interferes with state and local laws meant to protect animals and consumers. For example, seven states currently prohibit the sale of dogs from breeding operations with a history of serious AWA violations. Without ready access to inspection reports, dog sellers in those states will have no practical way to comply with these laws, and state and local law enforcement efforts will be severely impeded.

While the agency has indicated that the public can access these documents by submitting a request under the Freedom of Information Act, history has shown that such requests can take months, and even years, to fulfill. We should be increasing government transparency, not diminishing it and shielding those cited for violations of these key animal welfare laws. We hope you will immediately restore what was removed from USDA's website regarding the Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act, and resume posting inspection reports, annual reports, and other animal welfare related documents so that the public can access them in an efficient and timely way.


Sincerely,



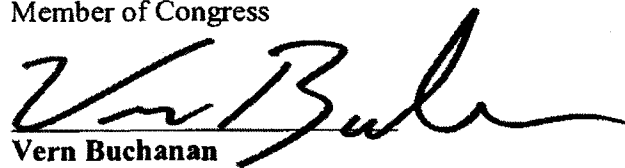
Martha McSally
Member of Congress



Lou Barletta
Member of Congress



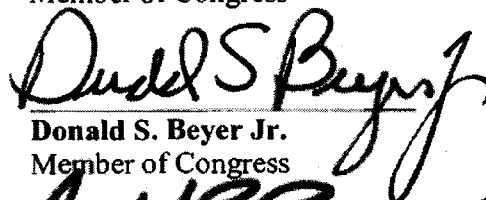
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



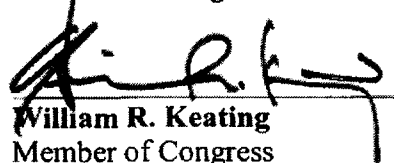
Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress



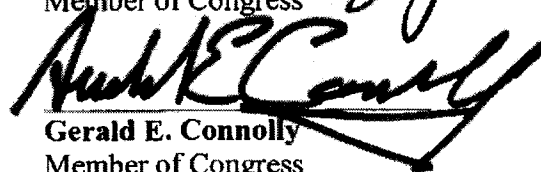
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



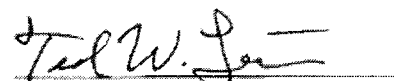
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



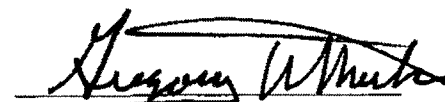
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



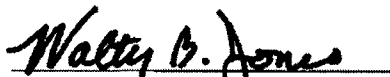
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

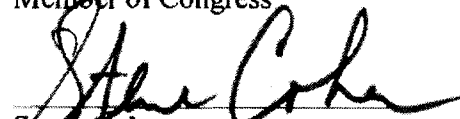


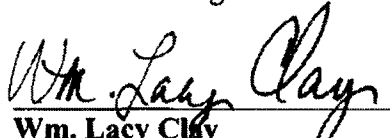
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress




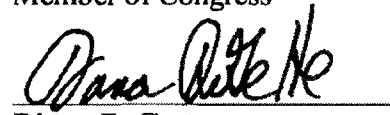
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

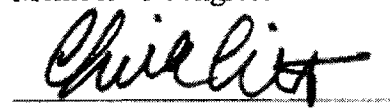

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

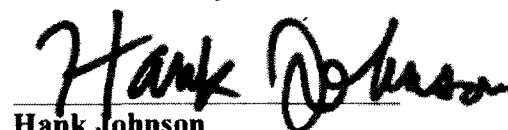

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

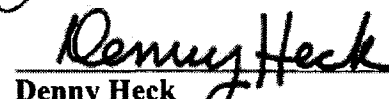

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress

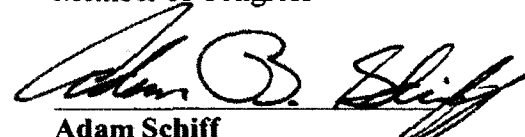

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress


Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

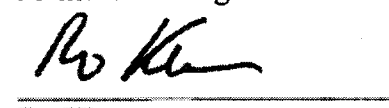

Denny Heck
Member of Congress

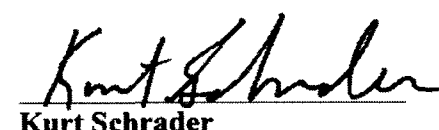

John Lewis
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

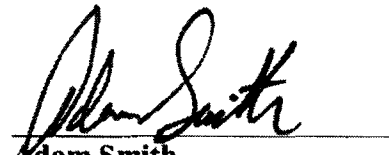

Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



Dan Lipinski
Member of Congress

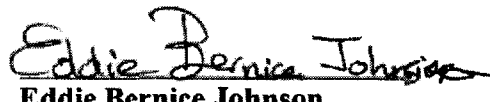

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress


Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress



Tony Cardenas
 Member of Congress

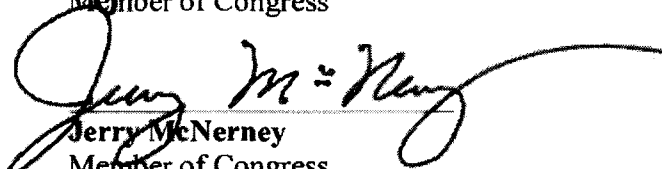

Adam Smith
 Member of Congress

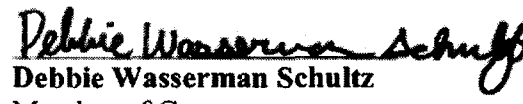

Jan Schakowsky
 Member of Congress

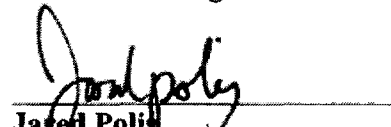

Eddie Bernice Johnson
 Member of Congress

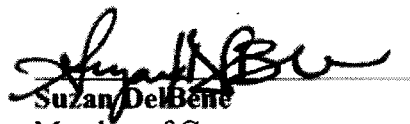

Kirsten Sinema
 Member of Congress

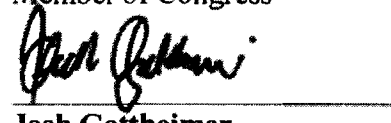

Ryan A. Costello
 Member of Congress

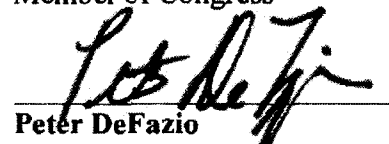

Jerry McNerney
 Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
 Member of Congress


Jared Polis
 Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
 Member of Congress

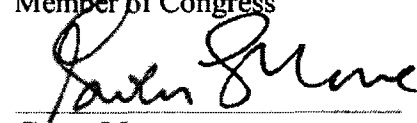

Josh Gottheimer
 Member of Congress

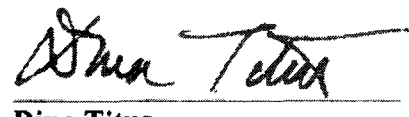

Peter DeFazio
 Member of Congress

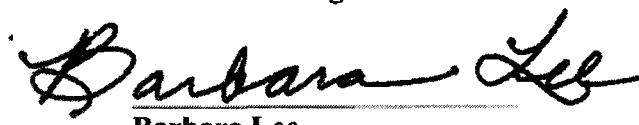

Sheila Jackson Lee
 Member of Congress

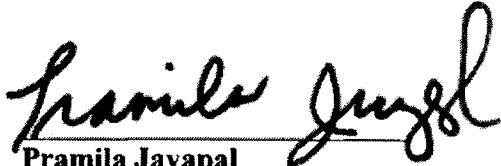

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
 Member of Congress

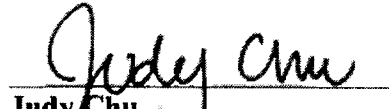

Alcee Hastings
 Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
 Member of Congress



Dina Titus
 Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
 Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
 Member of Congress



Judy Chu
 Member of Congress

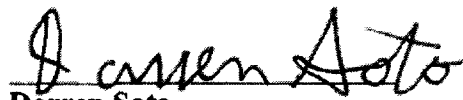

Jim Langevin
 Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
 Member of Congress

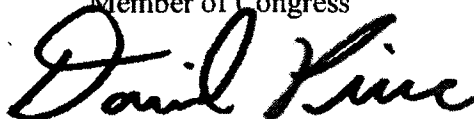

Brendan F. Boyle
 Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
 Member of Congress



John K. Delaney
 Member of Congress

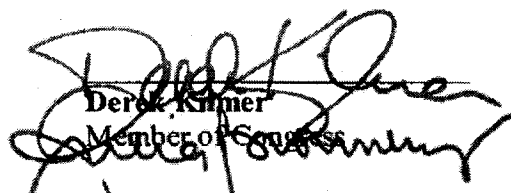

Darren Soto
 Member of Congress

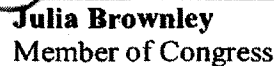

Joseph P. Kennedy III
 Member of Congress

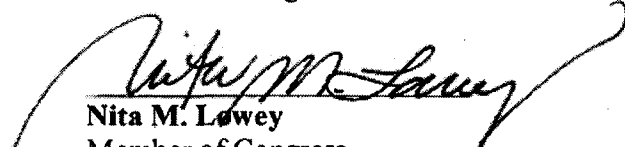

David Price
 Member of Congress



Susan A. Davis
 Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
 Member of Congress


Derek Kilmer
 Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
 Member of Congress

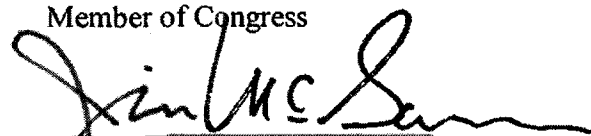

Nita M. Lowey
 Member of Congress


Paul Tonko
 Member of Congress


Nydia Velazquez
 Member of Congress


Linda T. Sanchez
 Member of Congress


Danny K. Davis
 Member of Congress

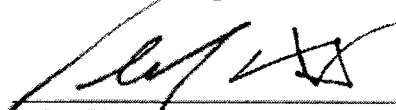

James P. McGovern
 Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



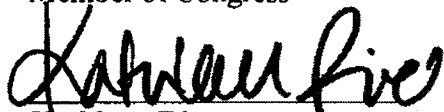
Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



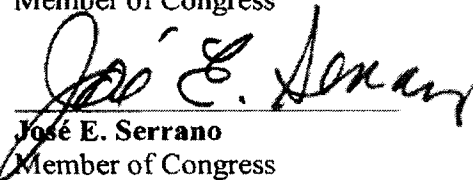
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Kathleen Rice
Member of Congress



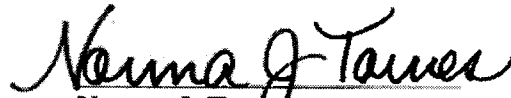
Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



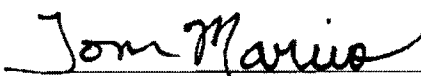
Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



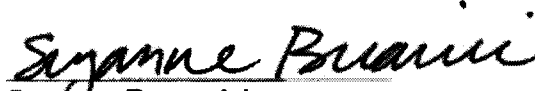
Chris Smith
Member of Congress



Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress



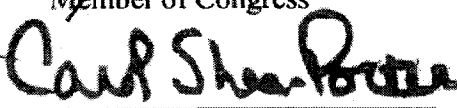
Thomas Marino
Member of Congress



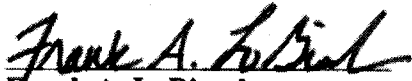
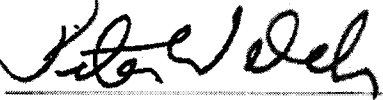
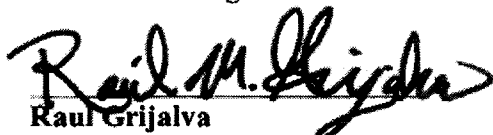
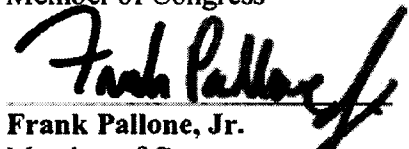

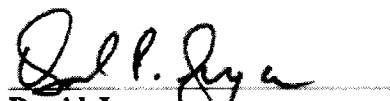

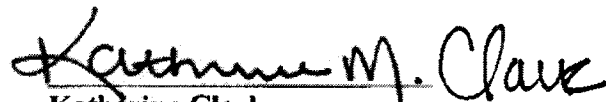
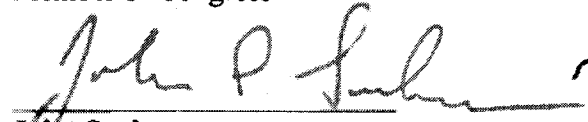

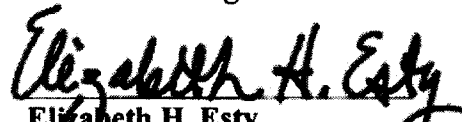
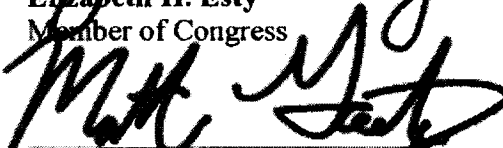

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress


Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress
Peter Welch
Member of Congress
Madeline Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress
Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress
Filemon Vela
Member of Congress
Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress
David Joyce
Member of Congress
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress
Katherine Clark
Member of Congress
John Sarbanes
Member of Congress
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress
Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress
Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress
John Katko
Member of Congress



**Fax From
Congressman MacArthur**

Address: 535 East Main Street, Marlton, NJ 08053
• Phone: (856)-267-5182
• Fax: (856)-574-4697

FACSIMILE

Feb 15, 2017

To: USDA

Attention: Todd Batta

From: Kyle Melander, Constituent Services Representative

Subject: Congressional Inquiry

Constituent Name: [REDACTED]

Fax to: 202-720-8077

Phone:

Comments: Please see the attached documents in support of our inquiry. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Page 1 of

2017 FEB 15 PM 12:13

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAT USDA

2017-APHIS-2230
THOMAS MACARTHUR
3RD DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

000053

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

VICE CHAIRMAN
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MILITARY PERSONNEL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3003

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
FEDERAL LANDS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
WATER, POWER AND OCEANS

February 15, 2017

Mr. Todd Batta
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
219a Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0001

Dear Mr. Batta,

[REDACTED] has contacted Congressman Tom MacArthur's office in resolving a matter with which you might be able to provide assistance. Enclosed are copies of the information we have been provided on the particular situation for your review. Requesting the status of the USDA puppy mill list which is missing.

Your prompt consideration would be greatly appreciated as [REDACTED] is eager to resolve this matter as soon as possible. A copy of your response will be sent to Congressman Tom MacArthur's constituent. If you could please send your response to:

Office of Congressman Tom MacArthur
Attn: Kyle Melander
Po Box 122
Marlton, NJ, 08053

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 856-267-5182.

Sincerely,

Kyle Melander
Constituent Services Representative

OCEAN COUNTY
33 WASHINGTON STREET
TOMES RIVER, NJ 08783
(732) 866-8488
(732) 998-8137 (FAX)

WASHINGTON D.C.
508 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4785
(202) 225-0778 (FAX)
macarthur.house.gov

BURLINGTON COUNTY
535 EAST MAIN STREET
MARLTON, NJ 08053
(856) 267-5182
(856) 574-4897 (FAX)

2017-APHIS-2230

000054

CONGRESSMAN
**TOM ▲
MACARTHUR**
3RD DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

**PRIVACY AUTHORIZATION FORM**

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a), I hereby authorize Congressman Tom MacArthur or a designated member of his staff to inquire with the following federal agency on my behalf.

MSDA
Federal Agency Name

Signature: _____

Date: 2/10/16

Please provide all of the following information and return this form to one of the district offices, listed below, so that we can begin processing your request.

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Primary Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Date of Birth _____

Social Security Number _____

Would you like to receive Congressman MacArthur's weekly e-Newsletter? Yes: ☐ No: ☐

Please clearly print a detailed description of your issue below. Do not write "SEE ATTACHED."

Puppy mill lost missing

Ocean County Office:

Township of Toms River Town Hall
33 Washington Street, Toms River, NJ 08753
Phone: 732-569-6485 | Fax: 732-998-8137

Burlington County Office:

P.O. Box 122
Gibson House Community Center
535 East Main Street, Marlton, NJ 08053
Phone: 856-267-5182 | Fax: 856-574-4697

2017-APHIS-2230
From: Lowe, Molly <Molly.Lowe@mail.house.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 17, 2017 11:25 AM
To: AGSEC - OES
Subject: Calvert USDA Letter
Attachments: Calvert USDA Letter.pdf

000055

Hello,

Please see a letter attached from my boss to the Acting Deputy Secretary.

Thank you,

Molly Lowe
Office of Congressman Ken Calvert (CA-42)
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
(202) 225-1986

KE 2017-APHIS-2230
42ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2205 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0542
(202) 225-1986
FAX: (202) 225-2004

DISTRICT OFFICE:
4160 TEMESCAL CANYON ROAD
SUITE 214
CORONA, CA 92883
(951) 277-0042
FAX: (951) 277-0420



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 16, 2017

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

000036

SUBCOMMITTEES

CHAIRMAN

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES

DEFENSE

HEARD BY HOUSE INTELLIGENCE

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

WWW.CALVERT.HOUSE.GOV
FACEBOOK.COM/REPKECALVERT
@KECALVERT

Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young,

I am writing today in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) announcement on February 3, 2017, regarding the removal of previously publicly available animal welfare reports from its website.

It is my understanding that the removal of the documentation related to the administration of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA), including inspection reports, research facility annual reports, and lists of persons licensed and registered under the AWA, came in response to the pending court case, *Contender Farms, L.L.P., Lee McGartland, Mike McGartland and Show, Inc. v. United States Department of Agriculture*, and liability concerns related to the violation of due process rights and the privacy of individuals involved in inspections conducted by APHIS. As the USDA explained in the Editor's Note to the announcement, dated February 7, 2017, the decision to remove this information has been in motion for a number of months, and had been under consideration by the previous Administration.

While I understand that these concerns must be addressed by the USDA, as an advocate for animal welfare and transparency in the federal government, I found the removal of this vital information troubling. As you are aware, APHIS's online database provided a rare look into animal use data and was a widely used resource that provided information to entities concerned with monitoring trends in animal research.

For many years I have advocated for transparency in the federal government as it relates to the welfare of animals. In 2000, my legislation, the ICCVAM Authorization Act, was signed into law and created the interagency government committee charged with promoting the use of more accurate and cost-efficient alternatives to animal use for toxicity testing by federal agencies.

More recently, I introduced H.R. 816, the Federal Accountability in Chemical Testing Act, which specifies that biennial progress reports already required under the ICCVAM Authorization Act include details on the number and type of animals used by each agency as well as what tests

they conducted. This legislation would allow the federal government to effectively measure the progress of ICCVAM in two year increments, while providing important information on the development, validation, acceptance, and utilization of alternative test methods.

I understand the perspective of the USDA that it is difficult to ensure that posted documentation follows the Privacy Act of 1974. However, I do believe there is a way to address these concerns while still making this information available. I hope the USDA will put forward every effort to continue to provide this vital information to the public and I would welcome your feedback on how the Department could do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Calvert", written over a horizontal line.

KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress

United States Senate

731 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2204

February 16, 2017

Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young,

I am writing to express my concern about the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) actions on February 3, 2017, to remove information regarding enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA) from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website. The documents that USDA removed contained important information about enforcement of and compliance with animal welfare laws in the 8,000 licensed U.S. facilities that use animals, including commercial dog breeding facilities, animal research laboratories, animals in zoos and aquariums, and Tennessee Walking horse exhibitors. Specifically, the types of documents removed included facility inspection reports, lists of regulated entities, enforcement records, and research facility annual reports. Such information had been publicly posted on APHIS's website for years. The information was a valuable resource to provide transparency into USDA's enforcement of these important animal welfare laws and allowed the public to see cases of abuse and mistreatment of animals.

Given this action to remove information was made with no warning and little explanation, many questions have surfaced. I ask that you provide me with a written response to the following questions no later than March 1, 2017.

1. Please provide me with a detailed list of all information USDA removed from the APHIS's website related to the AWA and HPA. Describe the entire basis for USDA's decision to remove the information. Who made the decision to remove this information? Was this decision made solely by APHIS or were other Administration officials involved in making this decision?
2. Why did USDA decide now to remove this information even though it had long been previously been posted on the USDA's website?
3. Is it USDA's position that any laws or regulations required the removal of enforcement information for the AWA and HPA? Please provide any such legal basis for each type of information removed from the website.
4. Did any administration policy changes require the removal of this information? If so, please provide such policies.
5. The Freedom of Information Act requires the public disclosure of certain information. For example, section 552 requires making available documents "likely to become subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records." Given that these

types of records have been used for years by animal welfare groups and others, do you believe removal of these records violates this provision of the Freedom of Information Act?

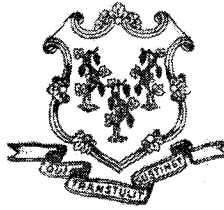
6. APHIS stated that those seeking information related to AWA and HPA should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Generally, it takes a long time to get responses to FOIA requests. What alternative methods will USDA commit to use to make the types of documents that USDA recently removed from APHIS's website available in a timely fashion?

If your staff has questions regarding this letter, please have them contact Mary Beth Schultz on the minority staff of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at (202) 224-2035.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Debbie Stabenow", written over a horizontal line.

Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member



State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

February 17, 2017

Secretary of Agriculture-Designate George E. Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary-Designate Perdue,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern about the United States Department of Agriculture's recent decision to remove a variety of records, including animal welfare inspection reports and enforcement records, from its website. These previously public documents provide the records of violations of the Animal Welfare Act, which regulates every commercial animal facility in the country, from zoos to research laboratories to dog breeders. These records have been used to reveal multiple cases of animal abuse or mistreatment, many of which would not have come to light without access to this formerly public information. Perhaps the most well-known recent instances have been the mistreatment of animals at SeaWorld and at the Ringling Brothers Circus. After the public outcry resulting from the abuses found in these reports, the Ringling Brothers Circus has closed its doors and SeaWorld faces increasing pressure to improve its treatment of captive whales.

These records were also used by state agencies, in Connecticut and across the country, to ensure that entities operating within the state have followed USDA regulations. For example, Connecticut's statutes regarding pet shops not only prohibits shops in the state from obtaining a dog or cat from any breeder not in possession of a current and valid license from the USDA, but also prohibits the shop from selling an animal from a breeder who has committed a single direct violation or three or more indirect violations of USDA regulations during the last two years. Without the access to records documenting these violations, how can a Connecticut pet shop and subsequently its customers, be sure that an animal comes from a reputable breeder? Further, how can the Connecticut Department of Agriculture fulfill its statutory obligations regarding dog or cat breeders, or regarding any other animal facility within the state, without access to this information?

Secretary Perdue
February 17, 2017
Page 2

The removal of public records from a government agency's website is not a partisan issue. We should all be concerned about moves that restrict government transparency, particularly when the move is as drastic as removing documentation of violations. I urge the United State Department of Agriculture to rethink this decision and restore public access to this information immediately. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Bob Duff
State Senate Majority Leader



Cathy Osten
State Senator

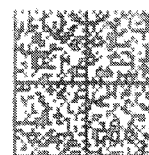


Connecticut State Senate

SENATOR BOB DUFF

MAJORITY LEADER

State Capitol, Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591



U.S. POSTAGE PITNEY BOWES



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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY USDA

Secretary of Agriculture-Designate
George E. Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250



From: Regan, Garth (Burr) <Garth_Regan@burr.senate.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 9:13 AM
To: AGSEC - OES
Subject: FW: Karen Phillips
Attachments: 20170301091643654.pdf

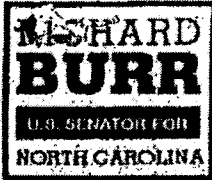
Good Morning,
Please let me know if you have any trouble opening the attachment. Thanks.

Garth Regan
Deputy Director of Economic Development
Director of Field Operations
Office of Senator Richard Burr
336.631.5125 (O)
[REDACTED] (C)
336.725.4493 (F)

From: Regan, Garth (Burr)
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 12:46 PM
To: 'agsec@osec.usda.gov' <agsec@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Karen Phillips

Good Afternoon,
Please see the attached Release Form and correspondence from one of Senator Burr's constituents. Please let me know if you need any additional info to help address her concern.
Thanks.

Garth Regan
Deputy Director of Economic Development
Director of Field Operations
Office of Senator Richard Burr
336.631.5125 (O)
[REDACTED] (C)
336.725.4493 (F)



217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
PHONE (202) 224-3154
FAX (202) 228-2981

RECEIVED

FEB 24 2017

PRIVACY ACT RELEASE FORM

Richard Burr, M.C.
Washington, DC

The provisions of Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974) prohibit the disclosure of information of a personal nature from the files of an individual without their expressed consent. Accordingly, I authorize Senator Richard Burr or any authorized member of his staff to access any and all of my records that relate to the problem stated below.

FEDERAL AGENCY OR DEPARTMENT: Please specify the name of the Federal Agency or Department involved in the space provided below:

USDA Department of Transportation USDA

Signature**Date**

February 09, 2017

Mail Form to**or Fax to Winston Salem**

Senator Richard Burr
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

(336) 725-4493

Your Information**Name****Address****Email****Date of Birth****Phone Number****Social Security Number**

~~Please~~ list other individuals with whom you authorize the release of information on your case:

NATURE OF PROBLEM: Please provide a complete statement on the reverse side of this form regarding the nature of the problem and the assistance needed from the office of Senator Richard Burr. Please attach copies of any additional pertinent documents.

Statement:

This is a problem with USDA which was not on your list to choose from as a problem agency. I am writing regarding animal welfare. The USDA has changed it operations with regard to publicly showing on its web site Inspection Report info. It has taken off animal welfare reports. Before one could go online and find all commercial animal operations that have sanctions for cruelty and violations. This has helped many agencies trying to prevent abuse of animals. Just on Fox New Tucker Carlson's show, Beagle Freedom Project was interviewed. Before the list of universities and researchers who experiment with animals was posted, this Project would be able to reach out to these facilities to help Beagles who are alive after experiments have been conducted. They would take and place these beagles in homes. Now they can't do that which means that many animals, not just beagles, who are used for experimentation, may die. This is tragic. I am astounded that this has happened. Even more so that President Trump has been blamed for this. That is outrageous in itself. Please discuss this with whoever it is necessary to discuss it with so that the list will go back on.

From: Foley, Martha
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov)
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:27:32 PM

Well, I assumed it was effective at 1PM.

I will need cached versions of everything that was on the website as of whenever it was taken down.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:27 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Yes, the plan was to remove the material and announce it in the same day.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:22 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Apparently those changes have already taken place???

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:15 PM
To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Will do. I'll be in touch.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:13 PM

To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

Can you check with Bernadette and give me times she is available?

I am relatively open.

Thx.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:12 PM

To: Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

I can work to set something up. When would be a good time for you?

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: Foley, Martha [<mailto:Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:09 PM

To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Compliance Information

I am not happy with this.

Will need a briefing.

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 12:01 PM

To: Straughn, Patricia <Patricia.Straughn@mail.house.gov>; Wedig, Mykel <Mykel.Wedig@mail.house.gov>; Crosswhite, Caleb <Caleb.Crosswhite@mail.house.gov>; Knigge, Mary <Mary.Knigge@mail.house.gov>; Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) (Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov) <Chelsie_Keys@ag.senate.gov>; Stoskopf, Wayne (Agriculture) <Wayne_Stoskopf@ag.senate.gov>; mary_olive@ag.senate.gov; 'grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov' <grant_colvin@ag.senate.gov>; kyle_varner@ag.senate.gov; O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>; Foley, Martha <Martha.Foley@mail.house.gov>; Clarke, Carlisle (Appropriations) (Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov) <Carlisle_Clarke@appro.senate.gov>; 'Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov' <Bob_Ross@appro.senate.gov>

Cc: Fretz, Abbey - OSEC, Washington, DC <Abbey.Fretz@aphis.usda.gov>; Whittington, Tanika -

APHIS <Tanika.C.Whittington@aphis.usda.gov>; Wenberg, Michelle W - APHIS
<Michelle.W.Wenberg@aphis.usda.gov>

Subject: Updates to APHIS' Website Involving Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act
Compliance Information

Hello,

At 1 p.m. today, APHIS will be announcing changes to its website and how it shares certain information involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. More information about these actions are in the stakeholder announcement we'll be issuing later, and in the attached Q&A document.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

**Updates to APHIS' Website Involving
Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act
Compliance Information**

For more than a decade, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has shared information on its website concerning its administration of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA). This information includes inspection reports, research facility annual reports, and lists of persons licensed and registered under the AWA, as well as lists of persons licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations and associations (HIOs) to inspect horses for compliance with the HPA. More recently, APHIS also began posting AWA and HPA regulatory correspondence and enforcement-related information to its website for the general public to view.

APHIS, during the past year, has conducted a comprehensive review of the information it posts on its website for the general public to view. As a result of the comprehensive review, APHIS has implemented actions to remove certain personal information from documents it posts on APHIS' website involving the Horse Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Going forward, APHIS will remove from its website inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, research facility annual reports, and enforcement records that have not received final adjudication. APHIS will also review and redact, as necessary, the lists of licensees and registrants under the AWA, as well as lists of designated qualified persons (DQPs) licensed by USDA-certified horse industry organizations.

Those seeking information from APHIS regarding inspection reports, regulatory correspondence, and enforcement records should submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for that information. Records will be released when authorized and in a manner consistent with the FOIA and Privacy Act. If the same records are frequently requested via the FOIA process, in most instances APHIS may post the appropriately redacted versions to its

website. In addition, some enforcement records (such as initial decision and orders, default decisions, and consent decisions) will continue to be available on the USDA's Office of Administrative Law Judge's website (<http://www.oaljdecisions.dn.usda.gov>).

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From: Keys, Chelsie (Agriculture)
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: FYI
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 12:15:55 PM

I'm pretty sure the animal welfare groups have issued some sort of action alert RE your website changes. I've heard from several offices that have been getting a ton of calls. Just wanted to tip you off!

Chelsie Keys
Senior Professional Staff
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS)
202-(b) (6)

From: O'Brien, Tom
To: [Needham, Christopher M - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:18:16 PM

Chris,

That is my fault. I originally asked for today, but I now see that you suggested tomorrow at 1:00PM. I will join the call tomorrow then.

Thank you,
Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202 (b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS [<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 1:16 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: Re: APHIS Meeting

Hey Tom -- sorry for the confusion but I had this down for Wednesday. Will that work for you?

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 7, 2017, at 1:13 PM, O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov> wrote:

Let us know when you are ready. Thanks

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202 (b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 12:22 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

Here's the conference line for tomorrow:

Phone: 888-844-9904
Access Code: (b) (6)

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: O'Brien, Tom [<mailto:Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 10:09 AM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS <Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Sure. For this briefing, a conference call is fine. I will ask Pam Miller of our staff to join me. Thanks, Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[<mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 10:04 AM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: Re: APHIS Meeting

If you're ok with the phone, that probably works best.

I can send around a line later this morning.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 7, 2017, at 10:02 AM, O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov> wrote:

Chris,
1:00 PM will work. Are you up on the Hill or did you want to do the brief by phone?

Thanks, Tom

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 9:12 AM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

Would Wednesday at 1 work?
Otherwise, we're pretty flexible on Thursday, aside from 10-11 and 2:30 to 3:30.

Let me know what works.

Chris Needham
Congressional Relations Specialist
USDA APHIS
202-799-7027
christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

From: O'Brien, Tom [mailto:Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2017 2:24 PM
To: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
<Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: APHIS Meeting

Thanks Chris

Tom O'Brien
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn Building
202-(b) (6)

From: Needham, Christopher M - APHIS
[mailto:Christopher.M.Needham@aphis.usda.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2017 2:05 PM
To: O'Brien, Tom <Tom.O'Brien@mail.house.gov>
Subject: APHIS Meeting

Hi Tom,

I heard from Abbey that you had requested a briefing on the recent AWA/Privacy Act announcement. I'm working to ID a few times for Kevin Shea and OGC to speak with you. I'll be in touch soon.

Chris Needham

Congressional Relations Specialist

USDA APHIS

202-799-7027

christopher.m.needham@aphis.usda.gov

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