

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Prime Minister
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21 March 2023

Dear Prime Minister

Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill

On behalf of the British Veterinary Association (BVA), which represents nearly 20,000 veterinary professionals, I am writing to ask you to ensure that the Government delivers on its manifesto commitment to animal health and welfare, by ensuring the passage of the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill into law.

As you know, ten months have now passed since this crucial and long-awaited piece of legislation had its second reading, after being carried over from the 2021-22 session. While we appreciate that national events have rightly and understandably led to changes in the parliamentary programme, we are urging you not to let this important piece of legislation slip through the net, especially as it only requires a few more hours to complete its initial journey through the House of Commons.

The delay to this important Bill is extremely concerning, as are reports that it will be split up and will not continue in its current form. The Bill's strength in terms of improving animal health and welfare comes from the package of measures it includes, such as those designed to tackle puppy smuggling and livestock worrying, prohibit the import of dogs or cats with mutilations, including dogs with cropped ears, review zoo standards and implement a robust and effective licensing system for all privately kept primates.

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill has significant public support and presents a golden opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of millions of animals. We urge you to prioritise this vital piece of legislation and set a date for its remaining stages.

Yours sincerely



Malcolm Morley
BVA President

cc Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP, Secretary of State, Defra
Professor Christine Middlemiss CB, CVO

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