

Lord Douglas-Miller OBE
Parliamentary Under Secretary
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
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10 January 2024

Dear Under Secretary

On behalf of the British Veterinary Association (BVA), I am writing to congratulate you on your appointment as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Vets play a vital role in animal welfare issues, as well as supporting the UK economy and international trade. As the leading professional body representing vets in the UK, with over 19,000 members, we look forward to forming a constructive relationship with you.

As an animal welfare-focused profession, we would also like to take this opportunity to raise our concerns with you regarding the Animal Welfare (Electronic Collars) (England) Regulations 2023. Since receiving approval in the House of Lords in June 2023, the Statutory Instrument's lack of progress has been concerning. Although it is due to come into force on 1 February 2024, and has been carried over into the current parliamentary session, it has yet to be allocated parliamentary time in the House of Commons.

As this important piece of legislation will make it a punishable offence to attach an electronic shock collar to a dog or cat, ensuring that these regulations are approved and implemented is crucial for the wellbeing of animals in England. Research shows that using fear and punishment as a training tool, via means such as electronic shock collars, not only takes its toll on an animal's overall welfare, it is also less effective than positive training methods. We would therefore be extremely grateful for your assurance that this Statutory Instrument will become law before it is too late.

We would also welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss other key policy matters which are of mutual interest, such as access to veterinary medicines in Northern Ireland, animal welfare in trade deals and broader animal welfare legislation. I enclose a copy of our manifesto for animals, vets and public health, for your information. If you feel a meeting would be beneficial, please do ask your office to contact our Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Alison Ramsay, at alisonr@bva.co.uk

Once again, please accept our congratulations on your new role – we look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely



Dr Anna Judson
BVA President

cc Professor Christine Middlemiss, Chief Veterinary Officer

British Veterinary Association
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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