The undersigned organizations have come together in strong support of Goldie’s Act to improve Animal Welfare Act (AWA) enforcement, and we respectfully urge you to include this important legislation in the 2023 Farm Bill. Robust oversight of, and accountability on the part of regulated animal businesses is essential, not only for the millions of animal lives at stake, but also for the efficient use of taxpayer dollars that fund the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal Care Program, and cost-effective use of law enforcement, animal control, and non-profit resources when rescue assistance is necessary.

Nearly 60 years ago, Congress passed the AWA to “insure that animals intended for use in research facilities or for exhibition purposes or for use as pets are provided humane care and treatment.” 7 U.S.C. § 2131(1). To achieve this goal, Congress authorized the USDA to institute humane standards of care, inspect licensed facilities, investigate suspected abuse, penalize violators, and cooperate with relevant federal, state, and local agencies to bolster compliance.

However, the USDA’s Animal Care program focuses less on humane animal care and more on licensee interests. Licensed entities can go years without inspection, resulting in prolonged, undetected animal suffering. Further, certain agency policies prevent or discourage inspectors from documenting violations on inspection reports and from removing suffering animals, thereby allowing cruelty to persist. Additionally, the agency’s failure to levy meaningful penalties sends a strong message to the regulated community that violating the law is acceptable. Moreover, despite a clear nexus between federal, state, and local welfare laws, the agency’s failure to promote timely communication with law enforcement has resulted in preventable cruelty and necessitated large-scale rescues. These rescue operations divert limited resources away from law enforcement, animal control, and non-profits who must step in to assist when the USDA fails to address cruelty. Understandably, law enforcement agencies—including some of the signatories to this letter—strongly support Goldie’s Act.

The Farm Bill represents a pivotal opportunity for Congress to direct the USDA to reverse course toward the kind of meaningful enforcement Congress intended when it passed the AWA.

Goldie’s Act is a commonsense solution that closes harmful policy gaps and clarifies the USDA’s enforcement responsibilities to prevent further abuse of discretion. This legislation would require the agency to inspect all regulated entities with reliable frequency, properly record all violations, hold
violators accountable by assessing meaningful penalties, provide immediate assistance to suffering animals, and inform law enforcement of animal cruelty at regulated facilities in a timely fashion.

Thank you for considering our request to include Goldie’s Act in the forthcoming Farm Bill to prevent chronic animal suffering and better steward taxpayer, government, and nonprofit resources.

Sincerely,

National Organizations
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF)
Animal Welfare Institute (AWI)
Best Friends Animal Society
National Animal Care and Control Association
Small & Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association

Alaska
Alaska SPCA

Alabama
Humane Society of Elmore County
RESCUES ON85TH

Arkansas
Good Shepherd Humane Society
Stone County Humane Society

Arizona
Arizona Humane Society
Fearless Kitty Rescue
Rover's Rest Stop

California
Fallbrook Animal Sanctuary
START Rescue
We Care Animal Rescue

Colorado
Colorado Citizens for Canine Welfare
Colorado Herding Dog Rescue
Colorado Voters for Animals
Humane Society of Boulder Valley

District of Colombia
Animal Rescue Corps
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys
Humane Rescue Alliance
Florida
Florida Urgent Rescue
Halifax Humane Society
Humane Society of Manatee County
Humane Society of Tampa Bay
Second Chance Animal Rescue & Sanctuary
SPCA of Brevard

Georgia
Adopt A Golden Atlanta

Iowa
Animal Rescue League of Iowa
It Takes A Village Animal Rescue and Resources

Illinois
Tails Humane Society

Indiana
Brown County Humane Society, Inc.
HELP the Animals, Inc.
Vanderburgh Humane Society
Woodhaven Rescue Farm Inc.

Kansas
Pawnee County Humane Society
The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City

Kentucky
Daviess County Animal Care and Control
Grant County (KY) Friends of the Shelter
Shamrock Pet Foundation, Inc.

Massachusetts
Boston Veterinary Clinic

Maryland
Baltimore Humane Society
Four-Legged Forgotten Oldies Senior Animal Farm
Maryland SPCA
The Humane Society of Harford County, Inc.

Maine
Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland

Michigan
All About Animals Rescue
Friends for Animals of Metro Detroit
Humane Animal Treatment Society
Humane Society of Huron Valley
Humane Society of Macomb
Michigan Anti Cruelty Society
Michigan Humane
VegMichigan

**Minnesota**
Borderland Humane Society
Minnesota Animal Services Alliance
Minnesota Humane Society
Ruff Start Rescue
Sundown Horse Rescue
The Rescue Crew
The Rescue Pack

**Missouri**
Owl Hollow Farm (501C.3)
Pet Resource Center of Kansas City

**Mississippi**
Mississippi Animal Rescue League

**North Carolina**
Feral Cat Coalition of Cumberland of County
North Carolina Animal Federation
Phoenix Rescue and Healing Farm

**Nebraska**
Dolly's Legacy Animal Rescue
Midwest Wheaten Rescue

**New Hampshire**
New Hampshire Humane Society

**New Jersey**
Eleventh Hour Rescue
Monmouth County SPCA
West Jersey Volunteers for Animals

**Nevada**
Washoe County Regional Animal Services

**New York**
Animal Rights Rochester
Coming Home Animal Sanctuary, Inc.
New York Cat Hospital
Phoenix Rising Equine Rescue & Rehabilitation
Veterinary Hospital and Clinic of East Hampton
Voters for Animal Rights
Ohio
Cleveland Animal Protective League
Ohio Animal Advocates
Secondhand Mutts

Oklahoma
Bella SPCA
Best Friends of Pets

Oregon
Equamore Foundation
Lark Ranch Rescue and Rehabilitation
Senior Dog Rescue of Oregon

Pennsylvania
Animals Can't Talk
Animal Care Sanctuary
Heart of Glass Animal Rescue
Sheriffs' Association of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

South Carolina
LowCountry Animal Rescue

Tennessee
Kenzie Consulting

Texas
Gulf Coast Humane Society
Mutley Crue Pet Sitting

Virginia
Animal Welfare League of Arlington
Yellow Dog Potter-Pots for Paw

Washington
Auburn Valley Humane Society
Motley Zoo Animal Rescue
Northwest Organization for Animal Help
Spokane Humane Society

West Virginia
West Virginia Chiefs of Police Association