

May 28, 2024

Mandy K. Cohen, MD, MPH
Director
U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Director Cohen,

I write to express my concern regarding the upcoming regulatory changes for dogs entering and returning to the United States. These new requirements, slated to take effect on August 1st, will have a significant impact on families in my district, as many have bi-national ties to or second homes in Canada.

As a representative of a border community, I represent bi-national constituents who will experience undue challenges from the proposed regulations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In our region, many families regularly travel between the United States and Canada, often accompanied by their beloved pets. Whether they are dual citizens, have family in Canada, or own second homes there, these stricter requirements will affect local families who wish to bring their dogs across the US-Canada land border. The six month age requirement for dogs to enter the United States, and the need for additional documentation and certification, such as the proposed CDC Dog Import Form and USDA endorsed Certification of U.S.-Issued Rabies Vaccination, will create barriers for families who simply wish to bring their dogs to family homes or second residences.

I understand the importance of ensuring the health and safety of both human and animal populations, especially in light of public health concerns such as rabies. However, I believe there is a need for flexibility in these regulations, particularly for border communities which utilize frequent land crossings where the risk of disease transmission is minimal. I respectfully request that the CDC consider providing an exception to these regulations for dogs traveling via land crossings in border communities between low-risk countries. This would alleviate the burden on families who rely on the ability to travel with their pets, and would still maintain the integrity of public health measures.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. Should you have any questions, I welcome your call.

Sincerely,

Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress (NY-26)