Frequently Asked Questions

The Healthy Dog Import Act, HR 6921

1. **Is this bill designed to prevent the import of dogs, or to specifically limit the import of dogs for rescue?**

   No. This measure is designed to address issues strictly related to public health and protecting the health of the U.S. public, pets and livestock.

   AKC recognizes the value of importing breeding stock from overseas, freedom of choice in selecting a pet, and ensuring that people may travel with their pets with a minimum of disruption. However, we are also concerned about the increasing documented incidences of the importation of unhealthy pets where public and pet health may be inadequately protected.

   Under the Health Dog Import Act, all dogs being imported—whether a top-winning show dog or a rescued street dog—will be required to have a valid health certificate signed by a veterinarian recognized by an accredited veterinary authority.

2. **Aren’t these standards already required?**

 Currently, the only USDA requirements for dogs imported into the United States are that they appear in good health and are at least six months old if imported for resale or adoption.

 The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention requires a rabies vaccination certificate only if the dogs are coming from a country the CDC considers at risk for canine rabies. The inability to verify documentation has resulted in numerous incidents in which certifications have been found by the CDC to be invalid or fraudulent.

3. **I travel across the US/Canada border frequently with my pets and/or to attend shows or other competitive dog events. How will this impact me?**

 AKC supports rules that allow for travel across the border with a minimum of disruption. Implementing regulations drafted by USDA would cover cases of frequent travel. However, as long as required vaccinations/health tests remain up to date, use of the electronic database should provide a minimum of disruption, and potentially expedite frequent travel across borders.