

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

We would like to draw your attention to an animal welfare issue involving a Philippines law which, if enforced, would end the illegal, cruel, and unhygienic trade in dog meat. Given the long-standing alliance between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, support, encouragement, and technical assistance from our government could help officials enforce the law and protect Filipino companion animals.

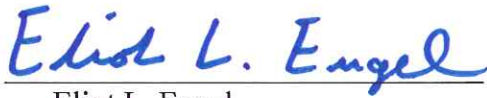
International organizations such as The Animal Welfare Institute, The Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International are deeply concerned about the cruelty of the dog meat trade. Time and again, traders round up strays and steal companion dogs. Some of the dogs caught are still wearing collars around their necks. Tin cans are forced over the dogs' noses, their front legs are tied behind their backs, and they are shipped to slaughter traveling for up to six hours without food or water in the blazing heat. Since the dogs are crammed into cages so tightly that they can barely breathe, many die before they arrive at the slaughterhouse. The pitiable dogs who survive the long journey are clubbed or their throats are cut while still conscious. Every year, up to half a million dogs suffer in this illicit trade.

Eating dog meat was banned in Manila in 1982 and nationwide in 1998 via Republic Act No. 8485. Known as the Animal Welfare Act, this law provides exemptions for dogs killed and eaten as part of indigenous rituals. More recently, this national ban was bolstered by the Anti-Rabies Act (RA 9482), which upgraded penalties for convicted dog meat traders to include jail time and substantially increased fines as one means of curbing the spread of rabies. The dog meat trade has been implicated in several serious rabies outbreaks over the past few years.

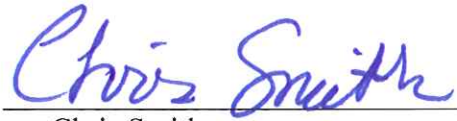
The good news is the Philippine government is now committed to eradicating the dog meat trade. While we believe the Anti-Rabies Act provides the foundation for permanently eradicating the dog meat trade in the Philippines, international support is critical to guarantee effective enforcement. We believe it is vital that our government does everything it can to aid the Philippines in banning this horrific practice. We respectfully request that you discuss with officials from the Philippines government how the United States can assist in the enforcement of the Anti-Rabies Act, through police training or otherwise, and support their efforts to ensure the law's effectiveness.

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



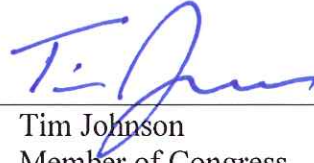
Eliot L. Engel
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Chris Smith
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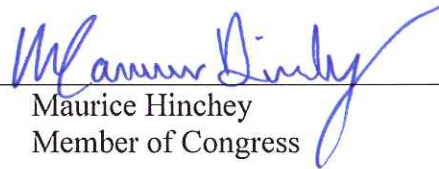
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Tim Johnson
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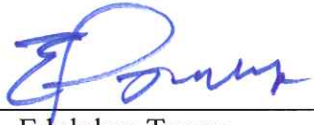
Raúl Grijalva
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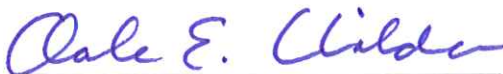
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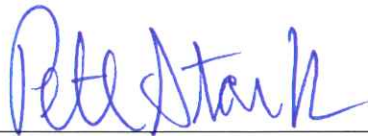
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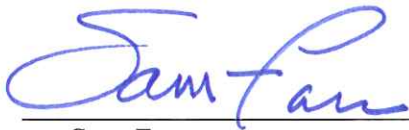
Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



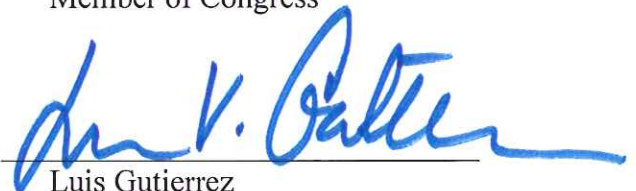
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Sam Farr
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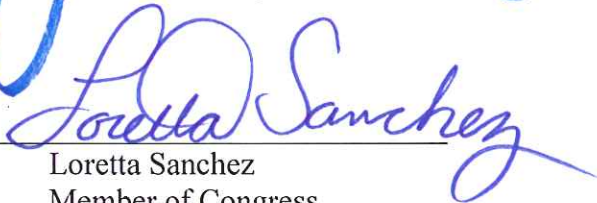
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