

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

22nd March 2024

Dear Constituent,

RE: CAT SMUGGLING

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about cat smuggling. I have read your comments with interest.

The UK has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and it is only right that we continue to improve our world-leading standards. While I have noted your suggestion for cats to be included in any proposals relating to pet smuggling, and my ministerial colleagues recognise that animal welfare campaigners have called for this, I am informed that criminal offences already exist for cats and kittens brought into this country in breach of current import requirements.

In August 2021, the Government carried out a consultation on proposed restrictions to the commercial and non-commercial movement of pets into Great Britain. The consultation sought views on whether maintaining the existing requirements in relation to cats was the right approach. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs has been carefully reviewing the feedback from this consultation and has also engaged more widely with animal welfare organisations, including Cats Protection. I look forward to reading the summary of the responses to the consultation in due course.

I am assured that the Government remains fully committed to delivering its manifesto commitments on animal welfare. I am aware that the *Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill*, introduced in June 2021, faced the risk of scope-creep. In light of this, and the successful progress made so far with single-issue legislation, the Government is supporting several Private Members' Bills which individually deliver on animal welfare measures in the *Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill*. Ministers believe this to be the quickest and most effective way of achieving our aims.

Finally, I am aware that the *Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats & Ferrets) Bill*, sponsored by Selaine Saxby MP, seeks to tackle the unlawful dog, cat, and ferret smuggling trade. The Bill aims to introduce stringent measures to regulate the import of the titled pets, ensuring their health and safety during transportation and deterring illegal trade practices. I welcome the Government's support of the Bill during its Second Reading, and I will continue to support this Bill when it returns to the House.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE