

Subject: LIVE ANIMALS ARE NOT BAGGAGE!

An estimated 5000 animals are lost, injured, or die each year due to extreme heat or cold temperatures, lack of oxygen, or rough handling while being transported in commercial airline cargo holds, but these tragedies have not been tracked in any way to distinguish them from loss or damage to ordinary baggage. To remedy this, Congress enacted a requirement in April 2000 for airlines to file monthly reports on incidents involving animals, and for the Secretary of Transportation to make this information available to the public so consumers can evaluate specific airlines' records. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has now issued a proposed rule to implement this requirement. While it has taken the agency a long time to act, we're pleased the FAA is finally moving forward on this. First, I'd like to THANK the agency and urge you to finalize the rule AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. As a veterinarian, I'm concerned that the proposed rule only applies to pets of U.S. families (the legislation allowed for other animals, such as those destined for labs or zoos, and pets from other countries, to be covered), and would like to ask that the final rule define "animal" more broadly.