

ALCEE L. HASTINGS  
20TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON RULES  
VICE-CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES  
HELSINKI COMMISSION  
CHAIRMAN

FLORIDA DELEGATION  
CO-CHAIRMAN

SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0920

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

2353 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20515-0923  
Telephone: (202) 225-1313  
Fax: (202) 225-1171

5701 NW 88th Avenue  
Suite 200  
Tamarac, FL 33321  
Telephone: (954) 733-2800  
Fax: (954) 722-9399

West Palm Beach  
5725 Corporate Way  
Suite 208  
West Palm Beach, FL 33407  
P: (561) 461-6767  
F: (954) 722-9399

[www.alceehastings.house.gov](http://www.alceehastings.house.gov)

June 9, 2020

The Honorable Xi Jinping  
President  
The People's Republic of China  
Zhongnanhai  
No. 174 Xi Chang'an Jie,  
Beijing, China 100017

*Via electronic correspondence.*

Dear President Xi:

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work to shut down China's live wildlife markets and trade for human food consumption as part of China's efforts to contain the Covid-19 pandemic and to eliminate a key potential source of future outbreaks of zoonotic diseases. We know that China is revising its Wildlife Protection Law to make the trade and consumption ban permanent. I wish you success in this important legislative step.

I also warmly welcome the statement made recently by China's Ministry of Agriculture confirming that dogs are considered companions and not livestock, and acknowledging that attitudes and appetites are changing.

On June 21, 2020, the Dog Meat Festival in Yulin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China is set to begin. I write to express my deep concern for the dog and cat meat trade and for the animals that are horribly mistreated during this festival, and respectfully urge you to end the festival, as well as the dog and cat meat trade across China. To do so would be in direct accordance with the Ministry's recent declaration on dogs. The festival is also a huge public health risk. For this mass dog meat consumption event, a large number of sick and dying dogs of unknown sources are shipped over provincial boundaries, mass slaughtered, and consumed in crowded restaurants and other social gatherings, posing risks of epidemic outbreaks.

As you may know, I, alongside a bipartisan group of colleagues, championed the inclusion of an enacted federal prohibition on the domestic dog and cat meat trade and

consumption across the United States in the *Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018*. Additionally, I have introduced H.Con.Res.71, a bicameral resolution calling on all nations to join the U.S. in ending the consumption and trade of dog and cat meat and to adopt and enforce laws banning this trade.

I understand that your government has well established laws regulating animal disease control, food safety, trans-provincial dog transport, and youth protection, all of which are violated by the dog meat trade, live animal markets, and by many of those taking part in the Yulin Dog Meat Festival. I urge you to build on these laws in order to adopt and implement full bans on live animal markets across China and of the Yulin Dog Meat Festival. Uniform enforcement of these laws would provide a foundation to address the abuse and health concerns that are associated with dog and cat meat markets, and consumption.

I applaud the efforts of your government and the millions of Chinese citizens who oppose this festival and the dog and cat meat trade more generally. I commend the cities of Shenzhen and Zhuhai for adopting local laws that outlaw wildlife consumption and the eating of dog and cat meat. Additionally, the city of Yulin has worked to address the growing concern about the infamous festival with some success, but I know that your leadership, in concert with the People's National Congress, can guide Yulin and other cities across China to institute and enforce the necessary laws to end the dog and cat meat trade in the interest of public health, food safety, and animal welfare.

In order to protect public health and fully address the current COVID-19 outbreak, we must take swift and decisive action. I fully understand that live animal markets and dog and cat meat consumption are not widespread practices, are not endorsed by your government, and that your government has sound and well-established laws to prosecute those who continue to put public health at risk on a global scale. It is my hope that you will join the growing effort in China, and indeed, across the globe, to eliminate the Yulin Festival and the dog and cat meat trade at-large as swiftly as possible, in order to protect the public health and welfare of communities and animals around the world.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I urge you to consider supporting this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alcee L. Hastings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

CC: Ambassador Cui Tiankai  
U.S. Embassy of the People's Republic of China  
3505 International Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C., 20008