

# Socrates the Dog Saved by Animal Wellness Action and Foundation from Deportation by Center for Disease Control

*Fight to save dog's life must lead to federal policy change*

WASHINGTON, D.C., USA, July 2, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Alex Azar tweeted a statement from Brian Harrison, HHS Chief of Staff, that Socrates the dog would not be sent back to Ghana. The intervention came a week after Socrates' initial arrival to the United States and Center for Disease Control's decision to deport Socrates back to Ghana due to an issue with rabies vaccine paperwork, stirring public outrage.



Socrates and Audra Elam

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*Holly Gann, director of federal affairs at Animal Wellness Action*

Socrates' guardian is Audra Elam, a Peace Corps volunteer who had been based in Ghana for two years. She was suddenly forced to evacuate and fly back to the United States in March without Socrates due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Elam immediately made arrangements to ensure Socrates received appropriate vaccines in Ghana and paid Mayden Pet Air, a pet transport company, to ensure completion of his paperwork and his safe arrival in the United States. Socrates arrived in the U.S. on Friday June 26th and was transported to The Ark at JFK. He was emaciated due to a food shortage in Ghana.

CDC had denied the dogs entry to the U.S., stating he must be sent back to Ghana for a rabies vaccine, held for 28 days, and then shipped back, again, to the U.S. The CDC maintained its puzzling decision, even after becoming aware that Socrates was malnourished and vaccinated by a U.S. veterinarian on Monday, and despite the owner's direct offer to pay for Socrates' quarantine and expenses to remain in the U.S. For the past week, Socrates waited as Elam,

Animal Wellness, and others fought for his life.

“The CDC’s bizarre decision to deport Socrates to Ghana would have been a death sentence for this innocent dog. We are in unprecedented and trying times, and we thank Secretary Azar and CDC Director Redfield for making the compassionate and common sense decision to allow Socrates to be quarantined in the U.S.,” stated Holly Gann, Director of Federal Affairs for Animal Wellness Foundation and Animal Wellness Action. “We will lead the charge to make permanent policy changes to ensure that what happened to Socrates will never happen again.”

“When this issue was brought to our attention, Secretary Azar asked HHS leadership to look into it. Working alongside CDC Director Redfield and our General Counsel, we have determined there is nothing within law that requires Socrates to return to Ghana for the duration of his quarantine. He can remain in the United States, and CDC will be reviewing its guidance to ensure it is consistent with what the law requires. The Trump administration has once again shown a dogged determination to pursue deregulation and unleash some common sense. Happy 4th, and welcome to America, Socrates,” [wrote Brian Harrison, Azar’s chief of staff on Twitter.](#)

[Learn more about the fight to save Socrates here.](#)



Socrates



Holly Gann, director of federal affairs at the Animal Wellness Foundation

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission

of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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