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COALITION REMINDS LAWMAKERS THAT ‘PET CARE IS ESSENTIAL’ AS COVID-19 CASES SURGE

Alexandria, Va. – December 9, 2020 – The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), along with a broad coalition of pet care community organizations and companies, is urging everyone who represents a business that provides for the care of pets to sign a new open letter to lawmakers regarding the essential nature of pet care. With recent nationwide surges in COVID-19 infection rates, along with holiday travel, the coalition anticipates that larger spikes will result that could trigger renewed lockdown orders such as those that were enacted in the spring.

“Earlier this year, thousands in the responsible pet care community spoke up on behalf of pets and pet owners as the COVID-19 pandemic evolved,” said Mike Bober, PIJAC president and CEO. “It is important that we continue to speak as one voice to remind lawmakers that pet care is essential, so that the businesses that serve the needs of America’s 85 million pets are allowed to remain open.”

The [new letter](#) recognizes lawmakers’ previous work to designate pet care as essential and urges them to continue to do so with any new restrictions, so that pet owners have uninterrupted access to the products and services—including veterinary, boarding and grooming—they need to care for their beloved pets. Pet business representatives who would like to add their name to the letter, which will be provided to select lawmakers at the local, state and federal levels, can access the letter and the form to sign it, at pijac.org/covid19.

PIJAC has also created a [tracking spreadsheet](#) that provides links to the government closure orders in each state that impact pet businesses. The document is updated on a regular basis and provides a summary, where available, of what types of pet businesses are designated as essential and what restrictions are imposed. Links to additional resources on protecting human and animal health and business operations are also provided on the page at pijac.org/covid19.

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About PIJAC

Founded in 1971, the [Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council](#) (PIJAC) serves as the legislative and regulatory voice of the responsible pet care community, working to promote animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, foster environmental stewardship, and ensure the availability of healthy pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers’ representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations.