

The Humane Society of the United States Reminds Inauguration Attendees to Leave their Pets at Home

(Jan. 13, 2009) — The Humane Society of the United States is reminding those planning to attend this historic event that all animals, excluding service dogs, will be prohibited from entering any inaugural event sites or locations. The Presidential Inaugural Committee has estimated that between one and three million people will attend next week's presidential inauguration ceremony in Washington, D.C.

The HSUS will be working under the authority of the D.C. Department of Health's Animal Disease Prevention Division to respond to any animal issues that arise during the inaugural activities. The HSUS' Emergency Services vehicle will be stocked with veterinary supplies and stationed within the inaugural staging zone. A second vehicle, capable of sheltering and transporting more than 100 animals, will be staged outside the security perimeter, to be available should any animal issues arise. HSUS staff and volunteers will be stationed among the crowd to assist if anyone with service animals or other animals is in need of assistance, including any needs of the police horses on site.

“While we understand the desire to share this momentous celebration with your pets, we strongly urge the public not to bring animals, other than service animals, to any of the inaugural activities or festivities,” said Scotlund Haisley, senior director of Emergency Services at The HSUS. “This precaution is for both the safety of the public and the animals, who risk being injured in the massive crowds.”

“Security precautions during this year's inaugural events will be unprecedented,” said Peggy Keller, Chief of the Bureau of Community Hygiene for the D.C. Department of Health. “We want people to be able to enjoy this exciting event safely, but any person with an animal other than a service dog will be turned away at the security check point.”

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The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization – backed by 10.5 million Americans, or one of every 30. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty -- On the web at humanesociety.org.