



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Puppy Rescue Mission Devastated At CDC's Ban On Rescuing Service Members' Battle Buddies

CDC's ban on importing dogs from 113 countries includes dogs saved and owned by service members deployed overseas

JUNE 15, 2021, CELINA, TEXAS: Puppy Rescue Mission, a 501c3 founded in 2010 to help United States service members bring home the dogs they find and bond with overseas, is devastated to learn that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has instituted a temporary ban on importing dogs from 113 countries. These countries represent the majority of locations where our service members are stationed and are classified by the CDC as high-risk for rabies.

"Since our inception in 2010 we have never turned a soldier away," said Anna Cannan Chiasson, President and Founder of Puppy Rescue Mission, "but that is about to change. Under the CDC's new rules, we will be forced to tell our service members to leave behind their best friend to suffer a short, pain-filled life of torture and abuse. This will be devastating to their morale, both on the battlefield and when they return home. We have never been in this position before."

Puppy Rescue Mission was founded by Chiasson when her then-fiancé (now husband) Chris bonded with a group of dogs in Afghanistan that had saved the lives of his fellow

service members from a suicide bomber. Chris bonded with these four-legged heroes and couldn't bear the thought of leaving them behind when he returned to the U.S.

Now, eleven years later, Puppy Rescue Mission has helped U.S. service members save nearly 4,000 cats and dogs from war zones, to live their lives together back in America.

Puppy Rescue Mission is a human rescue, not a traditional dog rescue. They diligently follow the import rules and have never once imported a dog with rabies. All dogs that have come to the United States are fully and safely vaccinated, and are owned by a U.S. service member, not available for adoption by the general public.

"To deny our service members the ability to bring home the dogs that they bond with while overseas can and will be detrimental to their mental health," continued Chiasson. "These dogs represent a sense of normalcy and family that they need while away from home. Our rescue stories are heartbreaking, and we know firsthand how much these service members need these dogs. With veteran suicide at an all-time high, this will be devastating to so many in the long term."

"This ban is overly expansive," said Michelle Smith, Puppy Rescue Mission's Executive Director since 2010. "I personally spend countless hours on permits for every single animal we have ever rescued, ensuring everything is up to date and accurate, to account for public safety and the safety of the humans and animals. We have never had an animal turned away for vaccination issues as we are incredibly thorough with our process and follow the rules very strictly."

Puppy Rescue Mission is imploring their supporters and the service members they have assisted to reach out to their local representatives, to help them understand how this will affect them. While no CDC exceptions currently exist to help dogs rescued by U.S. service members, Puppy Rescue Mission is hoping that by sharing their story, the CDC will recognize its importance and allow case-by-case permits to be issued.

ABOUT PUPPY RESCUE MISSION

Puppy Rescue Mission was founded in 2010 by Anna Chiasson to assist service members in rescuing the dogs that they bond with while serving our country overseas. While at war, our military often long for the comforts of home to get them through each day, including forging bonds with local stray dogs. The service members save these dogs from a short life filled with dog fighting and other abuse, and in return these dogs fill an emotional need for a sense of home and normalcy. Simply put, these 'battle buddies' make our service members' lives better while serving our country. And, just as they are trained not to leave a comrade behind on the battlefield, they want to bring their 'battle buddies' to the United States to live a life together when they return home. Puppy Rescue Mission makes this happen.

Since our inception, we have rescued nearly 4,000 dogs (and sometimes cats) from over 50 countries across the world, and get new requests for help each day. We don't say no, as we believe that no service member should ever be faced with the decision of leaving their 'battle buddy' behind. We raise funds to support our mission through our 500,000+ Facebook followers at facebook.com/puppyrescuemission, as well as various well-attended fundraising events across the United States throughout the year. Learn more at www.puppyrescuemission.com or call (972) 896-4571.

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