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WORLDWIDE WEB PAGE:
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November 12, 2003

Division of Dockets Management
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane
Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find additional information my office received from Mrs. Diane James regarding her concern for the fair treatment of prairie dogs.

Any questions you have about this inquiry can be referred to Alicia Hazelwood of my staff, who can be contacted by phone at (765) 662-6770. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Burton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Burton".

Dan Burton
Member of Congress

DB/ab

2003N-0400

C16

From the desk of..



Dianne & The James Gang

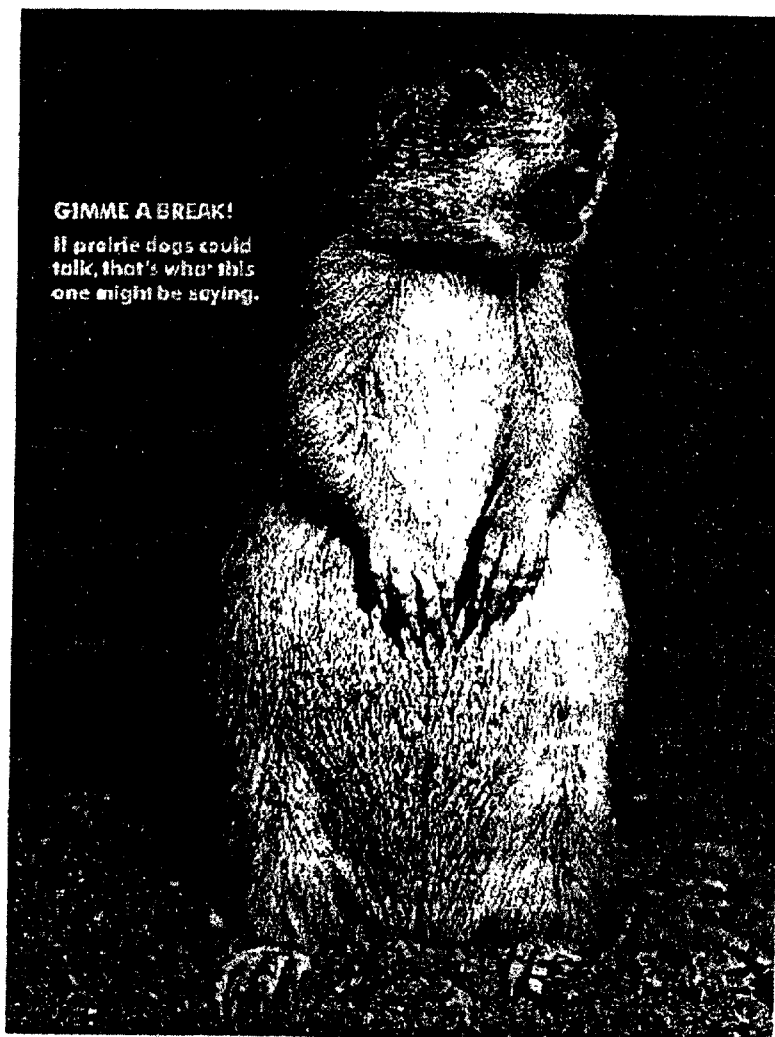
4034 North 300 West

Wabash, IN 46992

Date: October 3, 2003

To: President Bush, VP Cheney, Congressman Dan Burton, Agencies, Organizations

Re: Interim Final Rule – HHS – FDA RIN: 0910-ZA21



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Here are some questions that we would like answers to:

First and foremost, listing zoonotic diseases and the animals involved - why are prairie dogs the only native animal that action is being taken against in regards to the disease of monkeypox? Why isn't action being taken equally to all species that carry or transmit disease.. even humans????? Why have there been no travel restrictions on people? What if someone travels from africa and is exposed to monkeypox and brings it back to infect people in the US? Why were people still allowed to travel to and from Canada and Asia when SARS was spreading? This will help show how stupid this ban is and how it is not really about public health at all.

How do you stop the movement of mosquitos? (west Nile) or ticks?

Why isn't the logic of this document being applied universally?

Who can give us educated responses to our questions?

Who is accountable for these decisions??

What about the thousands of prairie dogs that have been ordered held in pet stores since June 11? Their caretakers have not contracted monkeypox. Why are they still being held and why is there no provision for them in this document other than euthanization? These are healthy animals, being held nearly 6 months now.

Why does this document not address the current pet owners of prairie dogs? Before the ban, there were approx 15,000 sold a year domestically and the same about sent abroad, where people have come to treasure and love prairie dogs.

Ask your exotic vets to write regarding this bill and they stand to lose \$\$ as each species gets banned.

Does anyone know what quarantine times and measures are in place for other species??? Could guidelines be set up for prairie dogs along the same lines so that they could continue to be sold as pets?

How can prairie dog owners be part of finding a solution?

Biologists working to reintroduce black footed ferrets would seek writing permission from FDA to

capture, transport, and release prairie dogs in connection with each black footed ferret program." (interesting that they are so worried about health issues related to monkeypox, but are willing to give the last remaining ferrets on the planet what is considered a huge health risk for the US population.)

This actually contradicts the provision that calls for the safe disposal of prairie dog carcasses. The ferrets are going to consume the prairie dogs and thus, if the argument of the order is followed to the letter, the order is actually endorsing the principle of "secondary poisoning" and not calling for their safe disposal after all.

On page one, in their own words, *"monkeypox is a RARE zoonotic viral disease that occurs primarily in the rain forest countries of central and west africa."*

The order fails to note that monkeypox has not been fatal except in Africa where access to good health care is seriously limited. The order fails to note that monkeypox is not the same as smallpox, a far more serious virus.

"In africa, serologic evidence of monkeypox infection has been found in many other species, including some species of primates, rodents, and lagomorphs." (rabbits aren't currently banned, kind of odd) Prairie dogs are mentioned because of consequence of fate. The rat was housed improperly near a PD. **The infected rat had also been housed by rabbit which consequently was infected with the virus, why don't we have a ban now on house rabbits?**

"African rodents are considered to be the most likely natural host of the monkeypox virus." **Considered by whom?** The name monkeypox suggests it is a virus more likely borne by primates, not rodents, as the originator.

"Individuals sometimes shoot prairie dogs because their burrows may present a hazard to cattle and horses, shooting a prairie dog would not constitute capture.." **(what about prairie dogs that are shot by varmint hunters for sport? has the FDA, in their extensive internet research seen prairie dog shoots offered on ebay, offered online at various sites? Maybe we should submit some of these advertisements as documents and evidence. Also, is there actual evidence that cattle and horses injure themselves in prairie dog holes? How is it that bison and prairie dogs co-existed for so many years?)**

There are ranchers who would, and do, dispute this. a cover story in an issue of the NWF magazine profiles a rancher family that coexists well with PDs. I think we can find this article and the rancher family.