



American Ferret Association, Inc.

1-888-FERRET-1 www.ferret.org PMB 255 Box 626-C Annapolis, MD 21401

DATE: _____

TO: Congressman/Senator _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE & ZIPCODE: _____

RE: USDA Rulemaking process regarding the shipping age/weight/maturity of infant domestic ferret kits being shipped to pet shops from large ferret farm breeders.

Dear Congressman/Senator _____:

The American Ferret Association (AFA) has received many, many complaints from the public regarding underage tiny infant ferrets being shipped from large ferret farm breeders to pet shops. The ferrets are so young that they cannot eat normal ferret food on their own and have little chance of survival unless bought or rescued by knowledgeable ferret owners. Many ferrets are dying from lack of knowledgeable care by the pet shops, which hope to “unload” them before any problems arise. Many also die in transit because of their size and immaturity.

Note: Please see our website at www.ferret.org for USDA settlement with US Airways regarding many baby ferrets dying in transit on their way to pet shops.

The AFA has been working closely with the USDA Animal Care Division to have rulemaking passed so that there are definitive criteria (currently there is none) on domestic ferret weights and ages at which they can be safely transported. Domestic ferrets are currently the **THIRD MOST POPULAR INTERACTIVE PET IN THE COUNTRY**, right behind dogs and cats, and at least 100,000 per year are currently being sold from mass commercial breeders through pet stores at an age and weight at which they are unable to fend for themselves. They are being spayed or neutered and descented at 4-5 weeks of age (ferrets do not even open their eyes until they are between 4.5 – 5 weeks old).

According to the U.S.D.A, the rulemaking changes are currently in process. However, USDA officials have told us that it could take more than a year to get the rules finalized to the point

where the public has an opportunity to respond to the initial draft. The USDA Public Information Officer, Mr. Jim Rogers, APHIS, LPA, 301-734-8563, has also informed the AFA that we could get faster action on this rulemaking process by notifying our Congressmen and Senators.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give to us. We are millions of domestic ferret owners in the United States and our national organization is very active.

Sincerely,
