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Comment from Anonymous

Posted by the **Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service** on Feb 17, 2026

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As an animal lover, I support the proposed extension and revision of the information collection process for the Animal Welfare Act (Docket No. APHIS-2025-0407). Information collection requirements under the AWA present an opportunity to increase awareness of animal welfare among regulated entities. Well-designed reporting systems should encourage stakeholders to recognize and uphold their responsibilities toward animal care.

I suggest digitalizing current reporting requirements. This proposal would enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of collected information. Transitioning from paper-based to digital submissions offers several benefits:

1) Improved monitoring and recordkeeping.

Digital records would enable APHIS to monitor compliance and retain documentation more efficiently. In cases of suspected violations, digital records would facilitate evidence assessment and help determine if corrective action is needed.

2) Reduced burden and increased participation.

Paper-based submission systems can create unnecessary burdens for respondents. Digital platforms would reduce logistical challenges, simplify compliance, and improve timely reporting.

Beyond digitalizing existing forms, I suggest expanding digital tools to include more frequent reporting, ideally daily, but more often than annually. For businesses handling animals, such as zoos, aquariums, farms, research facilities, and exhibitors, APHIS could implement periodic photo/video submissions documenting animal living conditions. Visual documentation would offer more accurate and objective insights than written reports. If structured with clear welfare indicators, video submissions could be analyzed and scored to ensure ongoing compliance and encourage daily attention to animal welfare. While this may involve concern on increase administrative workload, advances in artificial intelligence and automated image analysis could help review and score submissions after initial development.

When animals are part of a commercial enterprise, responsible parties must dedicate the necessary time and resources to ensure humane treatment. The estimated public burden for this information collection is 0.232 hours (approximately 14 minutes) per response. While efficiency is important, this relatively short reporting time raises concerns about whether respondents have sufficient opportunity to meaningfully reflect on and document the actual quality of animal welfare practices. Legislative and administrative efforts should

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not focus solely on minimizing reporting time. Instead, they should prioritize improving accessibility, clarity, and ease of submission while ensuring that the reporting process remains substantive and effective. If regulated entities are unwilling to meaningfully prioritize animal welfare in their operations, even well-designed standards will fail to achieve their intended purpose. Therefore, reporting systems should be structured to promote thoughtful engagement and reinforce the seriousness of humane treatment obligations.

Comment ID

APHIS-2025-0407-0017



Tracking Number

mlo-9o2u-gn5y

Comment Details

Submitter Info

Document Subtype

Public Comment

Received Date

Feb 15, 2026



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