June XX, 2022

Hon. Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Room S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Room S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned groups request your support for swift passage of S. 3678/H.R. XXXX, *Beagle Brigade Act of 2022,* a bill authorizing the National Detector Dog Training Center (the "Center"). The Center is the primary training facility for the so-called "Beagle Brigade," which helps protect America's natural resources and agriculture producers from foreign animal and plant diseases and pests.

The $1 trillion U.S. agriculture sector is a key component of the American economy and is fundamental to our national security. The introduction of foreign animal and plant pests and diseases costs the American economy tens of billions of dollars annually. The Agriculture Canine Teams of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) perform critically important agricultural inspections at the nation's ports of entry. These teams play a vital role in trade and travel safety, and work every day to prevent the introduction of harmful foreign animal and plant diseases and pests into the U.S. The introduction of a foreign animal diseases, such as Foot and Mouth Disease, African Swine Fever, or virulent Newcastle Disease, or plant disease, such as tomato brown rugose fruit virus or maize lethal necrosis, would have a devastating impact on U.S. agricultural producers, their communities, and the economy if introduced into the U.S.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) trains these dogs and their CBP handlers at the National Detector Dog Training Center in Newnan, Georgia. These specially trained teams are utilized by CBP to sniff out potentially contaminated products at U.S ports of entry, and prevent their introduction into the U.S. The Center also oversees the private adoption of retirement-age trained dogs and dogs that do not complete training. Congress has consistently supported this work, including through the passage of the *Protecting America's Food and Agriculture Act of 2019*, which authorized the training of additional canine teams. The Beagle Brigade Act would provide specific authorization for this highly successful training center and lay the groundwork for its continued success in the future. It would also require a report from USDA on current and emerging threats to domestic agriculture and natural resources and improvements that could be made through the Center to minimize these threats.

We ask Congress to support the National Detector Dog Training Center and the important work done by the Agriculture Canine Teams at our international ports of entry to guard against national security threats, address public safety risks, and grow the economy. To achieve this goal, we urge you to support S. 3678/H.R. XXXX.

Respectfully submitted,

cc: Chair and Ranking Member of House Committee on Agriculture and House Committee on Homeland Security

cc: Chair and Ranking Member of Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee