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(Co. No. SC109126) established in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Ltd.  
It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

Ms Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
The First Minister  
Scottish Government  
St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

Dear First Minister,

I was watching FMQs earlier today and I heard you say that later today you are going to announce a £1.5M (or £1.6M – I didn't hear it clearly) grant scheme to help Scottish Zoos over the Covid 19 crisis and that in addition another £0.5M in Government loans would be made available to zoos.

Are you going to include animal sanctuaries and rescue centres in this scheme? Many of these have lost major sources of funding by having to close charity shops and suspend fundraisers such as jumble sales and sponsored events.

Some will be in a far worse position than the RZSS which I estimate had circa one year of reserve funding at the start of the crisis. However I don't know if that takes into account the US\$1M a year the RZSS pays the Chinese Government for the lease of the two political prisoner propaganda pandas for which your Government recently allocated a £2M publicly funded grant and a £500,000 Government loan.

I'm afraid I cannot tell you how many animal sanctuaries and rescue centres there are in Scotland as we have been waiting for many years for legislation requiring these to be registered and licensed to ensure they all meet high welfare and fiscal standards. Perhaps the relevant Government Departments could progress this with a view to resolving it when we come out of the C 19 crisis?

I would like to finish by saying that I admire the way you have been dealing with the unprecedented situation you find yourself in and the huge pressure you must be under to try and do the impossible and get everything right. Your striving to keep the crisis above party politics sets an example others sadly fail to follow.

I hope you agree that animal welfare is above party politics and will do what you can to help animal sanctuaries and rescue centres at this grave time.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Robins, Animal Concern