

From: **Ellen Curtis** <[ecurtis@nycacc.org](mailto:ecurtis@nycacc.org)>

Date: Mon, Apr 20, 2015 at 2:12 PM

Subject: A Message to our Partners

To: New Hope Program <[NewHopePrograms@nycacc.org](mailto:NewHopePrograms@nycacc.org)>

Dear Friends,

I am writing concerning the NYC Comptroller's audit of ACC, which was conducted a part of their routine audit function. The results of that audit, along with ACC's comments, were made public yesterday. As many of you may have seen or heard in the media, Comptroller Scott Stringer lambasted ACC publicly.

Mr. Stringer's incendiary public remarks and the media coverage that followed is indeed troubling. For more than a year, ACC has been cooperating with the NYC Comptroller's office as they audited our operations and financial controls. Our own audit team met with the city auditors multiple times and we discussed the findings with the auditors before the report was finalized. Unfortunately Scott Stringer said some very damaging and sensational remarks which are circulating on multiple media outlets. What went unsaid was that his own audit team complimented our entire team – including all of you -- our collective knowledge, professionalism and the condition of our animals. At no time did the auditors reveal to us practices and deficiencies that are “disgusting or dangerous,” ... “that make your skin crawl,” ... “your stomach turn,” or that we are “mistreating animals” in any manner. Moreover, our attempts to meet personally with Comptroller Stringer received little or no reaction. He hasn't even been to any of the shelters during the course of this audit (and possibly never) to experience what we are doing everyday to make ACC a more humane place for animal welfare. I want all of you to know how strongly I believe in ACC and remain committed to the steady progress we have made on so many levels, introducing new and innovative programs with the potential to drive our live release rate steadily higher and provide our animals a level of care that we can all be proud of. The audit provides 15 recommendations for improvement and we began making operational changes in response six months ago. Our written response acknowledges the compliance issues and presents an action plan. We are not making excuses or defending performance that is not optimum. The audit is an important tool to remind us that ACC needs to be our best everyday and that the city expects no less from us. I have confidence in our team and our commitment to the health and well being of all the animals in our care.

In case you are asked by friends, family, colleagues about the audit, I encourage you to refer to the response below that we provided to the media, as well as our full responses submitted to the comptroller several weeks ago (attached). I have also attached a copy of the public audit report from which Stringer drew his remarks.

Your support and help is needed now more than ever to ensure that our reputation and the progress made to date aren't overshadowed by Stringer's hyperbole. He took a factual report and cloaked it in language that has the potential to set all of our hard work back in the public eye. I thank you for always advocating on behalf of NYC's animals. I believe sincerely in the work we are doing together and am beyond grateful for your commitment. I sincerely hope you will keep your faith in AC&C.

Risa

**AC&C's written response to media inquiries:**

Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C) has worked cooperatively with the Office of the NYC Comptroller's throughout this audit and was afforded an opportunity to meet with the audit team and provide comment and background on the report. AC&C has already undertaken steps to implement several of the recommendations in the Comptroller's report, and will continue to strengthen our policies and procedures to ensure optimum performance and the best possible care for our animals.

As the only open-admissions organization in the five boroughs, Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C) does not close its doors to any animal in need, and takes in more than 30,000 animals each year. Of the nearly 29,000 cats and dogs who came to AC&C in 2014, more than 21,000 were placed with adopters or partner organizations and more than 1,600 were returned to owner, resulting in a live release rate of 80.7%. (Detailed [statistics](#) are available on our website). We are committed to continual improvement, and are grateful to the City for recently announced capital funding that will, among other advances, allow us to build a new adoption center on the site of the Manhattan Care Center garage as well as update the HVAC system at our Brooklyn Care Center.

**Risa Weinstock**  
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