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**Media advisory for:
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Workers, community and clients to rally in support of outspoken union supporter fired by Bay Area's largest animal hospital

SAN FRANCISCO - Concerned pet owners, community groups and employees will rally in support of Katy Bradley, an outspoken union supporter and advocate for better patient care who was recently fired by SFVS-VCA, the region's largest specialty animal hospital. Bradley was terminated hours after the company was notified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that a number of complaints were going to be filed against them for violating federal labor law. She has worked for SFVS-VCA for nearly eight years.

The rally will take place on Thursday, July 30th at 3:45 pm in front of San Francisco Veterinary Specialists (SFVS), 600 Alabama Street at the corner of 18th Street, in San Francisco's Mission District. The rally will be preceded by a car caravan that will start at the Safeway Parking Lot on 16th & Bryant at 3:15 pm and depart for SFVS-VCA at 3:30 pm.

Proper COVID safety measures including wearing masks and social distancing will be practiced by all workers and attendees.

Reporters who attend the event will have an opportunity to interview Bradley.

SFVS is a private, for-profit facility owned by VCA and the Mars Corporation. The facility offers specialty care at a premium price for seriously sick pets. Bills for the specialty services can reach \$10,000, \$20,000 or more. The San Francisco hospital is part of America's lucrative and fast-growing animal care business that generated an estimated \$86 billion last year.

Supervisor Hillary Ronen, who represents the Mission District, has raised concerns about the firing of the outspoken union leader at SFVS-VCA. "Since the beginning of this pandemic, Katy and other front-line pet care workers have been putting their own

health at risk to come into work every day to provide essential healthcare for our pets. We are saying to SFVS-VCA: Obey federal labor law, respect the rights of workers to collectively bargain, and reach a fair contract with these workers,” Ronen recently said.

SFVS was quietly purchased in 2017 along with hundreds of other animal hospitals and clinics for \$9.1 billion by the Mars Corporation, the privately-held company that’s famous for their M&M candies. Mars now controls a large share of America’s animal care industry, along with ownership of IAM’s and Pedigree brand pet foods, and other animal-linked assets. Mars has come under fire in recent months by civil rights activists for the packaging of their Uncle Ben’s brand rice products and by human rights activists using slave labor in the production of their cocoa products.

In 2018, employees voted by a 3-to-1 margin to form a union and affiliate with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). Since that time, workers have been trying to negotiating their first contract. The company has hired anti-union consultants and lawyers to avoid reaching an agreement. The company also refused to meet more than one day per month until the company finally agreed to meet twice per month to settle a complaint in the fall of 2019 with the NLRB for bargaining in bad faith in violation of federal law.

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