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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CANDIDATES PROMISE REFORM AT HOUSTON PETSET MAYORAL FORUM

Houstonians tuned in online to watch and learn what the candidates had to say regarding Houston's animal welfare crisis.

(HOUSTON, TX) – [Houston PetSet](#), a local nonprofit organization working to end Houston's homeless animal crisis, hosted Texas Senator John Whitmire, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, Gilbert Garcia and Council Member Robert Gallegos at their 2023 Houston Mayoral Forum on Animal Welfare on Monday, September 25, 2023. The forum was moderated by KPRC2 anchor and animal welfare veteran Lisa Hernandez at Crime Stoppers of Houston, with an engaged in-person audience and well over one hundred live stream viewers at home.

All candidates saw a need for increased funding for the city's Bureau of Animal Regulation and Control (BARC) and conceded that not enough attention has been given to the homeless animal crisis and its consequences. The questions were sourced directly from a poll on Houston PetSet's website, and focused on animal control funding, public safety, enforcement of laws and ordinances, and collaboration with the county government.

The hour-long forum has been the only one of its kind where candidates could showcase accomplishments and plans with regard to animal welfare issues like stray animals; local and statewide interventions; and access to affordable resources for pet owners. The rescue, sheltering, and animal-loving communities agree that without strong leadership at City Hall, there is no end in sight for this humane crisis. They plan to hold whoever is elected accountable to what they may have promised at the forum.

"Houston PetSet is proud to bring this issue to the platform of our elected officials," said Tama Lundquist, Co-President of Houston PetSet. "Along with the hundreds of rescue groups with whom we partner, we will not back down until we see systemic change. The crisis has reached levels where residents don't feel safe walking outside, children can't walk to school, and public transit riders cannot wait at their stops without being accosted by dangerous animals. It's time to get serious about the future of our city, and it starts at the top."

As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, Houston PetSet is unable to endorse a candidate, but they encourage all citizens to watch the forum and decide who they feel will make the best decisions and policies when it comes to the safety of Houstonians and their pets.

WHAT: Houston PetSet's 2023 Mayoral Forum on Animal Welfare

WHEN: Monday, September 25, 2023

WHERE: In person at Crime Stoppers of Houston and online at <https://bit.ly/2023MayoralForum>

[PHOTOS](#)

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ABOUT HOUSTON PETSET: Houston PetSet gives, connects, and advocates for lasting solutions in Houston to alleviate suffering and end companion animal homelessness. The 501c3 nonprofit umbrella organization does this through their own local programming and by supporting groups that have demonstrated accountability and are making an impact "in the trenches" in our community for the animals.