

Communication from Public

Name: David Riherd

Date Submitted: 02/13/2020 11:44 AM

Council File No: 16-1357

Comments for Public Posting: I am opposed to the ordinance as it is currently written. The current language would greatly hurt important conservation and life science education conducted in the City of Los Angeles.



Wildlife Learning Center

February 13, 2020

Re: Ordinance 16-1357 Opposition

Please accept this letter of opposition to **Council File Number:** 16-1357 as a matter of public record for the City Council hearing this ordinance draft.

My name is David Riherd and I am the Executive Director of Wildlife Learning Center. Wildlife Learning Center is a life science education, species conservation, and wildlife rescue organization located in Sylmar. We provide outreach education where our animal ambassadors travel to various locations throughout the City of Los Angeles and the greater Los Angeles area.

We would like to support this ordinance but there are areas of concern with the language. I am alarmed that the new language of the ordinance includes all wild or exotic animals on the same level as dangerous animals when the issues had previously referred to dangerous animals. During our last meeting with Dov Lesel, he asked for our input on what species of animals should be considered dangerous. I sent him a list of dangerous animals and I believe Jackie Navarro with Wild Wonders did as well. I'm not sure if Mr. Lesel was able to share these lists with anyone before he retired but I will add it below for your reference. Including all wild and exotic animals with the same restrictions as dangerous animals would mean that we couldn't take an opossum or a hedgehog to a scout group if music is played, or to a fundraiser where wine is served. We often participate in functions where music is played. Science nights, fundraisers, and special events generally play music and serve alcohol and eliminating these events would greatly impact our programs and our abilities to fundraise. At a recent hearing, Councilmember Koretz brought up the issue of alcohol and music being played at LA City events and Valerie Flores from the City Attorney's office mentioned that the City would be exempt from such restrictions. We were quite perturbed by that statement because if the backers of this ordinance truly believe that music and alcohol can cause distress to an animal then why should any entity be exempt from this ordinance.

My suggestions that would achieve what I believe Council originally wants, while still protecting our education programs, are the following:

- The alcohol and amplified music clause should be struck as it encompasses many of our conservation events such as fundraisers, festivals, scout groups, museum benefits, as well as city related events.
- Placing "dangerous animals" back in for more restrictive permitting and removing wild and exotic animals, accomplishes what City Council intended – to prevent giraffes and elephants from being brought to narrow streets, blocking traffic for house parties. This language will

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- still protect the animal organizations, like Wildlife Learning Center, from providing conservation based and educational services with small exotic and non-dangerous species.
- Remove or redefine “the definition of exhibition being for the benefit of a live-audience. To the letter, such wording defines every activity accomplished by and education and conservation organization, on and off premises.

We once again ask that the authors of this ordinance give us an opportunity to discuss achieving what we believe the city is truly trying to achieve with ordinance. Please allow us to participate in creating language that will not be detrimental to true conservation, education, and animal welfare.

Respectfully,

David J Riherd
Wildlife Learning Center
Executive Director
818-362-8711
David@WildlifeLearningCenter.com

List of dangerous species and my experience sent to Dov Lesel October 16, 2019.

My name is David Riherd and I am a cofounder of Wildlife Learning Center in Sylmar, California. I have a Master’s Degree in Biology and over 25 years of experience working with exotic and native wild animals including wild felids, wild canids, nonhuman primates, crocodilians, pythons, boas, raptors, and many other species of wildlife.

I am a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Zoological Association of America (ZAA), and an Advisory Board Member for America’s Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College.

In my experience, I believe that the species of animals in the following orders shall be considered potentially dangerous and special consideration should be given for the exhibition of these species.

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Order Primata

- Great apes (gorillas, orangutans, chimpanzees)
- All species of baboons
- All species of macaques

Order Carnivora

- Canidae: Wolves
- Ursidae: Bears
- Hyaenidae: Hyena
- Felidae: Panthera (lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars), mountain lions

Order Proboscidea

- Elephants

Order Artiodactyla

- Hippopotamus
- Pigmy Hippopotamus
- Giraffe

Order Perissodactyla

- Rhinoceros

Class Reptilia

- Non-venomous snakes over 10 feet in length
- Venomous snakes

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Communication from Public

Name: Stacy M Gunderson
Date Submitted: 02/13/2020 01:06 PM
Council File No: 16-1357
Comments for Public Posting: I am opposing Council File # 16-1357 as it is written with the attachment below.

Stacy M. Gunderson
10234 Escondido Cyn Rd,
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(805)341-2515

2/13/2020

L A City Council
Council File # 16-1357

To Whom It May Concern,

I want it to be on record that I oppose ordinance 16-1357 as it is written. An animal of a non-domesticated order or family, mammalian, amphibian or reptilian that is potentially dangerous by nature as a species and poses inherent risk of harm to human health or safety including but not limited to, order Felidae, Carnivora, non-human primates etc. etc... covers pretty much every animal out there. The only way we could make it broader is by saying any creature with teeth. It is too open to abuse by interpretation. The other hardship is the 10 day notice. Even in a perfect world 10 days will lead to loss of jobs. Government agencies can get bogged down as most schools want educational programs at the end of the year. This will lead to a abnormal amount of applications all at the same time and if Animal Services is running behind we will once again lose work to the permit not being issued in time. We already have to apply 5 months in advance for our California Fish and Wildlife permits because they need 90 working days to review our applications. Our industry is being decimated by over regulation.

Sincerely,

Stacy M. Gunderson