

April 5, 2017

Crystal C. Chen
Bob Dunn's Animal Services, Inc.
16001 Yarnell St.
Sylmar, CA 91342

Dear Committee on Personnel and Animal Welfare,

OPPOSITION to agenda item #16-1357: Please include this letter into public record to be included in any hearing, studies, and or reports pertaining to this issue.

My name is Crystal Chen. I have worked in the animal industry for almost 10 years. I am a studio animal trainer and I work for an accredited company that has supplied animals for the motion picture industry for over 40 years. In addition to studio work, we also provide animals for special events, presentations, outreach, etc.

All of our animals are cared for with the upmost respect. We give them a nutritious diet for them to thrive on, provide them with behavioral enrichment, train them with behaviors to stimulate their minds, exercise them to ensure that they are in good physical health. We care for the physical and psychological well being of our animals. Our facility is properly permitted by USDA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as city permits. When we take our animals to events, we establish rules and boundaries to assure the safety of the public and the animals.

I can speak on behalf of everyone in the animal industry when I say that we LOVE the animals we work with. We have all chosen a career path that restricts us from having weekends and holidays off. We often work through the night and are on-call 24/7. Most of us do not have the luxury of planning vacations because our animals have their own schedules that we adhere to. We give up social lives because we absolutely love what we do and feel that the animals come first.

I am writing to you not as an animal professional, but as a concerned fellow civilian. I believe that this ban will jeopardize an important form of education for our future generations. Studies have shown that people learn best in a hands-on environment, whether it takes place at a school or a private event, restricting live animals could potentially prohibit a learning experience. Giving people an interactive and personal animal experience inspires them to help animals and our environment.

I urge you to reconsider the exotic animal ban, not for me, not for the current animal professionals, but for our future generations and the impact that they could have if only they had a glimpse of inspiration that many of us animal lovers once had.

Thank you,
Crystal Chen
Animal Trainer