

October 3, 2019

Cindi Cavallini

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 Cindi Cavallini and I have worked with exotic animals for more than 30 years. I currently own an organization that specializes in educational outreach, specializing in Offsite School, library, fair and birthday party visits. I can tell you with absolute certainty that the impact I have on conservation by providing the programs that I do is incomparable to anything these children would experience anywhere else. Regardless of the venue, be it at a school, library or backyard birthday party our conservation message is always the same. I provide a safe, up close and hands on opportunity for children to experience and learn about exotic animals that they would not experience from visiting a zoo. In fact, most children in the Los Angeles area cannot afford a visit to your fine zoo, being that admission is \$22 for adults and \$17 for children that is a lot of money for just a family of four! My programs are in fact often sponsored by low income cities and Title 1 schools, like many in the city of Los Angeles, and provide a free experience for all families, regardless of their income. These programs also encourage children to go to the library and make it a safe and enjoyable place to be.

Unfortunately, the proposed ordinance, takes the opposite stance, advocating that the only acceptable means of providing this experience is from an AZA accredited zoo. Simply because a facility cannot afford to become accredited or is too small to apply, does not make it any less professional or important. By outlawing our ability to visit the locations we visit and lumping us together with any fly by night animal owner is unfair. This ordinance would put up roadblocks in our ability to teach and promote our conservation message that we provide to thousands of students and library patrons every year!

As a professional charged with ensuring the well-being of the animals in my care, I can tell you that the travel and experiences of our animals is a positive one. As professionals we are trained and experienced in recognizing any signs of stress, and if an animal in our care were to experience stress it would be removed immediately from exhibit. All of my animals are under a veterinarian's care and has the protection of that veterinarian himself, because they must uphold their oath and report any problems with our animals they may suspect.

When I care for the different species I am charged with, I must rely on the safe and appropriate handling and training I have learned, from my college degree and ongoing learning, and my 30 years of experience. An animal that is tractable and well trained has less stress when having a medical procedure, interacting with the public, during training sessions and in activities overall. Having a calm, willing participant animal is a happy animal when it comes to outreach.

I urge you not to accept at face value the mischaracterizations of this proposed ordinance that will limit our ability to instill the lifetime of respect and caring we provide to children and adults alike, who meet our animals every day.

Sincerely,
Cindi Cavallini

Professional member of Zoological Association of America
Professional member of American Association of Zoo Keepers
Co-chair of Animal Welfare Committee for Circus Fans of American
American Association of Zoo Keepers International Outreach Committee member
Graduate of Moorpark College Institute for Wild and Exotic Animal Studies