

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to request you reconsider introducing an exotic animal ban into the city of Los Angeles that is redundant and overreaching. Please submit my letter as public comment in record.

My name is Jackie Navarro. I am a wildlife biologist by degree and director of a wildlife conservation organization that conducts educational programs at schools and events much like hundreds of other science educators in Los Angeles. Wild Wonders has been in existence since 1991 serving our community through quality outreach programs utilizing animal ambassadors as living visual aids. The retention and impact of the concepts and terminology by the students are proven.

Many of our animals have come to us as illegal confiscated pets or were abandoned. As an alternative to euthanasia, they are given behavioral enrichment; veterinary care, varied and nutritious diets have become effective educational media. These ambassadors inspire children and adults alike to be better stewards for the environment, more effectively than any slide presentation or television show (there are numerous studies out there showing a vast difference in memory retention and empathy with live animals as teachers). We bring our animals to schools and libraries, and also provide educational birthday parties, as our message of conservation and education, is appropriate and effective in a variety of venues.

All of our animals are trained humanely with positive reinforcement, and in fact, the training itself serves as enrichment, much the same way as a well trained dog enjoys his training. Our animals are extremely well adjusted and very comfortable in their ambassador role. I'm asking you to listen to the professionals who

are constantly educating themselves in the latest husbandry because they love and care for these animals every day.

In addition, we are happy that the state of California is the most restrictive and regulated in the country. We are inspected by USDA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and local animal services for oversight.

Furthermore the actual risk to the public is negligible. Far more people are injured in food service related incidents, per capita.

Please research the lack of incidents and the stellar safety record of these organizations. Please do not take away valuable learning opportunities for the children and adults of Los Angeles. I appreciate the opportunity to offer these comments from an educational expert's point of view. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jackie Navarro
Director



