



Adam Lid <adam.lid@lacity.org>

Opposition to agenda #16-1357

1 message

Shannon Smith <snsmith33@gmail.com>
To: Adam.Lid@lacity.org

Mon, Apr 24, 2017 at 8:23 PM

April 24, 2017

Dear Committee on Personnel and Animal Welfare,

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

I am hugely opposed to this bill.

My name is Shannon Smith and I have been an animal trainer for the San Diego Zoo Safari park for the past 14 years. I care for a variety of animals providing training, enrichment and excellent care consisting of mental and physical exercise, top health care and nutrition. We have always been permitted, licensed and followed all the rules/laws and regulations required to be in business.

Our animals are well cared for and well loved. We have a staff of trainers dedicated to their daily care. The trainers, veterinary staff and nutritionist oversee all of the diets for the animals, making sure they eat a high-quality, nutritious diet, and that they are always at a healthy weight. Our facility is properly permitted by USDA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as city permits.

My job often infringes on time off that people with 'normal' jobs have. I work long after many are sleeping, and on the weekends and holidays, caring for and training the animals. Often, I do this work for free, out of love for the animals. This is a choice that I made, and continue to make on a daily basis, due to my love for the animals and my job.

The trainers that work with all these animals on a daily basis love their animals and could not imagine doing any other job. I am sure part of the reason most of us joined this world was because we grew up going to zoos, watching TV shows or movies that featured animals and we wanted to pursue a career in this amazing world

I am writing, not only to protect my job, as a professional animal trainer, but also as a person who loves animals. My love for animals, which started at a young age, compelled me to seek out my career. Being an animal trainer is not always easy, as mentioned with my lack of time off. Seeing animals in commercials, on TV, in movies, or in educational shows can have a tremendous positive impact on our youth. Often, the connection that a child feels for a live animal can compel them to make positive changes to this world, giving that child a greater appreciation for our environment and nature.

I urge you to reconsider the exotic animal ban. I truly believe it will have a negative impact, on the animals- which are so well cared for, the trainers, who will be out of work, and future generations, who will lose the opportunity to connect as deeply to animals as I have.

Realize now before its too late - you will be putting hundreds of trainers and caretakers out of a job, losing their business and then what happens to the animals? This will also impact film industry jobs in general in the state of CA. If a movie is to be made and needs certain animals and cannot be shot without them - the production will move out of state to do this. You then open up a door of inexperienced people trying to do our job and endangering animals and peoples lives due to lack of knowledge.

PLEASE do not pass this bill.

Thank you,

Shannon Smith/Animal Trainer