



Adam Lid <adam.lid@lacity.org>

OPPOSITION to agenda item #16-1357

1 message

Rachael wallman <leikela16@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 14, 2017 at 8:11 PM

To: adam.lid@lacity.org, david.ryu@lacity.org, Paul.koretz@lacity.org

Dear LA City Council Members,

It has come to my attention that there is a bill on your desk titled "Prohibition on the Exhibit of Wild or Exotic Animals for Entertainment or Amusement" I am writing to you today to vehemently oppose this bill. I have spent my entire adult life working to raise awareness and understanding of the natural world. I have had the pleasure of presenting rescued exotic animals to the public for over 6 years. I have cared for these animals and built strong relationships with them. These relationships are based on trust, and reward based training. Through my work, and I do mean WORK, I have found the absolute best way to accomplish my goal as a defender of these animals and their wild counterparts is through connecting with the public. When children and adults see a live animal during an educational program they are suddenly involved in the experience in a way no book, or lecture can accomplish. They will retain the experience, remember it, talk about it later with family and friends. Many will want to become scientist and biologists to study these animals and protect them. But most importantly, they will CONNECT to the animals. Through that connection they have subconsciously attained empathy for the organism. Through that empathy they will enact change, however small, in their everyday lives. These simple changes, and growing respect for the world around them is how we create a better future.

This bill would force out small organizations like the one I proudly worked with for many years because they are not AZA accredited. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a great organization to be a member of, however, it is not usually possible for smaller organizations whose main goal is outreach. There are high fees and loss of potential state funding to consider upon accreditation. In addition, AZA requires all enclosures "look" like natural settings. This means many small facilities would need to completely renovate enclosures, with no true benefit to the animals housed there.

I do believe in regulations on types of animals people can have as pets, as well as standards for care and housing of exotic animals in facilities like those I have had the honor of working for. These standards should be constantly evolving and improving though. This bill slams the door on improvement. This bill is created by propaganda not research. This bill will do more harm for conservation efforts than any potential good.

When voting on this bill, please keep the following quote in mind.

"In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught." (Baba Dioum, 1968.)

Please do not shut the door. Please vote no on #16-1357

Thank you for your time.

Rachael Wallman
BS, Wildlife Management and Conservation, 2006
AS, Exotic Animal Training and Management, 2008