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Send Billy to Sanctuary and End Captive Breeding at the Los Angeles Zoo

1 message

Heather McHugh <takeaction@idausa.org>
Reply-To: Heather McHugh <h_mchugh@hotmail.com>
To: "Holly L. Wolcott" <Clerk.CPS@lacity.org>

Fri, Sep 22, 2017 at 4:44 PM

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Ms. Holly L. Wolcott

Dear Ms. Wolcott,

As a Los Angeles constituent and a supporter of California-based In Defense of Animals that represents over 250,000 supporters, I urge you to support Councilman Koretz's motion to free Billy, the lone bull elephant at the Los Angeles Zoo, to an accredited GFAS (Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries) sanctuary as soon as possible. We also ask the same for the female elephants at the exhibit, Tina and Jewell.

Billy's plight at the LA Zoo has been a focus of In Defense of Animals for over 12 years. The inadequate conditions that he is forced to live in, despite costly renovations to the Elephants of Asia exhibit, continue to negatively impact his well-being.

Through the LA Zoo's breeding program, Billy has been forced to endure a highly invasive procedure to collect his semen for the purpose of artificially inseminating females at other zoos for breeding. According to zoo documents, Billy underwent "training" for the actual semen collection process at least 55 times between January 20, 2011 and November 14, 2014.

This procedure is inhumane and invasive. While this has been touted as a practice of "conservation," the data shows that it is nothing of the sort, with elephants in zoos dying in captivity faster than they can reproduce due to the unnaturally high mortality rates of elephants in captivity. The only real way conservation for elephants can occur is in the wild and a certified elephant sanctuary is the closest thing to a natural environment that we can give to Billy.

There is no science- or conservation-based justification for the LA Zoo to keep Billy or ANY of the elephants, including females Tina and Jewel - in captivity. The scientifically validated negative effects of captivity on elephants are irrefutable and well documented.

Los Angeles must seize this opportunity for leadership on humane animal welfare issues and policy. Therefore, we urge you to support the relocation of Billy to a GFAS-certified sanctuary to transfer elephants Tina and Jewel as well - end all elephant captivity and elephant breeding programs at the LA Zoo immediately.

Sincerely,

Ms. Heather McHugh
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