



Congressman
RAUL M. GRIJALVA

Serving the People of Arizona's 3rd District

The Traveling Exotic Animal and Public Safety Protection Act

H.R. 2863



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Traveling circuses have always been detrimental to exotic and wild animals. Tigers, elephants, monkeys, and other exotic and wild animals are deprived of nearly everything that is important to them. They are denied physical and social needs and forced to endure small, confining cages for hours during transit. Brutal training methods include beatings and whippings, resulting in an extreme psychological mental stress known as "zoochosis." These imprisoned exotic animals have no choice but to perform for large crowds, which poses a threat to public safety. For example, in Poughkeepsie, NY, an elephant in the Hanneford Circus escaped from the ring and charged toward the crowd, injuring three people.

Due to the mobile and transitory nature of traveling circuses, law enforcement has difficulty monitoring and enforcing Federal animal health and safety regulations or following up on previous infractions. Monitoring animal welfare is also costly. The USDA inspected Carson & Barnes Circus 42 times over a three-year time period costing over \$57,000.

TEAPSPA would amend the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) to prohibit traveling circuses from holding exotic animals such as lions, tigers and elephants in captivity. The legislation is narrowly targeted - to address known public safety and animal welfare issues inherent to traveling wild /exotic animal acts; it does not impact domestic animals, farm animals, rodeos, research or filming activities, or most zoos, aquariums, educational outreach programs, or wildlife sanctuaries.



FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE BILL

1. Most Americans are now concerned about animals in circuses; >100 localities, including several states like New Jersey, Hawaii & California, and dozens of nations have taken similar action.
2. Federal oversight of traveling animal acts is costly, problematic, and unmanageable.
3. Animals in traveling acts are suffering and prone to health, behavioral and psychological problems.
4. Unlike human entertainers, animals do not choose to perform. Most "tricks" are coerced through the use of bull hooks, electric prods, whips, and metal bars.
5. Exotic animals are inherently unpredictable and performing unnatural acts in close proximity to crowds poses a serious risk to the public.

Currently endorsed by: Animal Defenders International, Animal Rights Coalition, Animal Welfare Institute, Animal Wellness Action, Big Cat Rescue, Colorado Voters for Animals, In Defense of Animals, Jungle Friends Primate Sanctuary, Last Chance for Animals, North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance, Northwest Animal Rights Network, Palo Alto Humane Society, Peace 4 Animals, Free All Captive Elephants, Social Compassion in Legislation, Utah Animal Rights Coalition, Western Mass. Animal Rights Advocates, World Animal News