

The Traveling Exotic Animal and Public Safety Protection Act (TEAPSPA)

A Brief Introduction for Members of Congress

Traveling Shows Cannot Meet the Needs of Wild Animals

Evidence and studies over the past thirty years makes it clear that, even with the best of intentions, traveling circuses simply cannot provide wild and exotic animals what they need to maintain their physical and psychological welfare.

Traveling shows are constantly on the move and therefore, out of necessity, animal accommodations must be small, lightweight, collapsible, and easy to transport. For the animals, this means restrictions on space to move around, and barren environments with nothing to engage them, resulting in chronic stress and abnormal behaviors.

Under this business model, the animals endure long periods of confinement in small spaces; physical and social deprivation; boredom; brutal control methods and physical violence. Additional stressors for animals in shows include noise; lights; careless positioning of prey animals in sight of predators; inappropriate social groupings and public contact.

The chronic stress suffered by wild animals in traveling shows is exhibited in abnormal, stereotypic behaviors, such as repetitive pacing, swaying, or head bobbing. These abnormalities indicate that an animal is not coping with its environment, and such behaviors are not seen in the wild.

There is no conclusive evidence that animals in circuses habituate to travel, and the stress of constant travel can be exhibited in ways that may not be immediately apparent.

No life worth living

Captivity does not alter the nature of wild and exotic animals in traveling shows. Stress can make them unpredictable and dangerous. Although all animals in circuses suffer, ADI studies and investigations reveal workers' heightened levels of violence toward wild animals, often linked to the animals' unwillingness to comply, and workers' fear when handling them.

It is a myth that circus animals are trained with kindness and reward. The tools of the trade include whips, goads, shovels, pitchforks, iron bars, bull hooks (heavy bars with a sharpened point and hook), and electric shock devices; most anything will suffice as a weapon. This is evidenced in studies, reports, and videos.

A comprehensive 2016 report analyzed the latest science and industry worldwide (consulting 658 experts/organizations) which concluded: *"Life for wild animals in travelling circuses and mobile zoos does not appear to constitute either a 'good life' or a 'life worth living'."* (Harris, The Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses, University of Bristol (2016)). A 2017 report detailed the public safety risks associated with wild animal circus acts, concluding: *"incidents involving animals in circuses occur regularly and frequently, causing varying degrees of public disorder or even the injury or death of people"* (Eurogroup for Animal Welfare, 2017)





Safety and Regulatory Oversight: Time consuming, expensive, unworkable

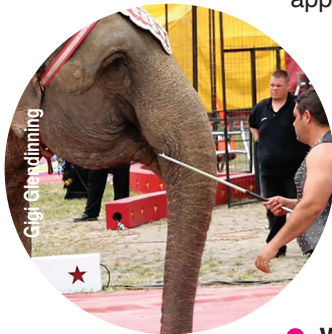
Placing large, chronically stressed wild animals in close proximity to audiences in temporary, collapsible accommodations risks public safety and has proven disastrous. Circus workers, and members of the public, including children, have been killed and maimed by circus animals – lions, tigers, and elephants have all escaped.

Federal oversight of traveling animal acts is costly, problematic, and unmanageable. The Office of Inspector General has repeatedly criticized USDA failings, including inspector deficiencies, reporting failures, failure to consult experts and over reliance upon ineffective 'educational' responses in lieu of enforcement (USDA APHIS Audit Reports, Office of Inspector General (2014, 2010)). These failings leave animals, workers, and the public unprotected.



Human Circus Acts a Success

- Like all businesses, these shows need to change with the times to stay relevant and profitable.
- An educated public prefers to see humane entertainment; around 20 human-performance circuses tour the US and, while animal circus attendance is in decline, human-performance shows are growing.
- Human-only performance shows create jobs without exposing citizens to stressed and abused animals. Most workers already fulfill multiple roles and staff can be redeployed.
- Studies show that, in a typical two-hour show, wild animals appear for less than 15 minutes.



Local and National Action

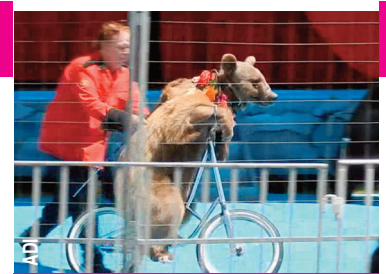
- **Over 100 US jurisdictions in 34 states** have some form of ban or restriction on wild animal acts. **New Jersey, Hawaii, California and Colorado have banned such acts statewide.**
- **More than 2/3 of Americans** say they're "concerned" by the use of animals in circuses. (2015 Gallup poll, at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/183275/say-animals-rights-people.aspx>.)
- **Worldwide, nearly 50 countries have banned the use of wild animals (or all animals) traveling shows, including:**

Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, England, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Ukraine and Wales. Similar laws are under discussion in a number of other countries.



Animal Defenders International

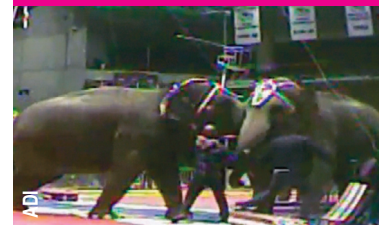
Located in the US, UK, Peru, Colombia and South Africa: ADI is an international education and animal rescue organization with a commitment to securing progressive animal protection legislation around the globe. ADI is recognized for providing detailed reports with evidence of behind-the-scenes suffering, supported by scientific, industry, and economic research. Assistance has been provided to governments in Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Guatemala with the enforcement of national wildlife protections, confiscating and relocating animals, including to the ADI Wildlife Sanctuary in South Africa (left).



Bears muzzled and forced to ride bicycles.



Small bare metal cells used to house bears in a prison truck.



Two elephants go out of control and start to fight.



Lion and tigers live in cages on the backs of trucks.



Dragged down and kicked in the face.



Elephants spend most of their time in chains - barely able to move.



Camels in a small, indoor pen backstage in an arena.



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