

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon House
Re: Opposition to HB3214
March 16, 2023

Dear Chair Kropf et al.,

This letter is in opposition to HB3214, an act to “prohibit person from using specified types of animals in traveling animal act.”

Concern for the care and welfare of wild animals in captivity is a highly commendable pursuit. I believe I share a great affection and respect for these creatures, as well as those in charge of their care.

I have presented dozens of animal attractions in my career in show production. These acts have entertained thousands of engaged patrons, without incident, and for good reason.

I have vetted both the owners and operators of these attractions, as well as their facilities. In all cases, these owners have an impassioned approach to their animals. They are decidedly NOT a one-size fits all community. Those I have had the pleasure of contracting universally share a concern for their animals’ welfare and the operating system at their facilities is commendable.

In fact, the animals in these instances, by virtue of their appearance, are in demonstrably better condition than the average household’s beloved pets and would comport with any healthy metrics such as size, weight, diet and nutrition. They also exhibit visible health characteristics such as luxuriant fur, feathers and the like.

The presentation of animals in our Sportsmen’s Shows is both entertaining and educational, by design. I have long believed that if you want to educate, you must engage. In every case, the animals presented by our chosen operators engage our audiences, not only with their awesome presence, but also with the backstories of their daily challenges to living in today’s world. Discussions in these presentations include the species’ habitat and challenges to that habitat, diet, daily routine, endangerment and other pertinent and interesting facts about them.

I fear, that without these live presentations, the renown endearment these animals evoke and the empathy sought for their challenges in an ever-threatening environment will be a losing cause. The fact that these presentations are conducted as such, is not by accident, but decidedly by the design of the animals’ caregivers.

These accomplished professionals deserve to be included in the legislator’s interest in providing protection to the animals of their concern. They care more for their animals than can be imagined. They daily weather a multitude of rules and regulations designed to prevent their inability to adequately care for their charges, and yet they continually do more.

I believe that including those minds in your thinking, not as opponents or proponents, could allow the legislature to fashion a workable solution to the long-term successful management of the animals of concern. They would be willing consultants, as they have a first-hand view of the situation and share the intent to continue to responsibly manage the welfare of the very object of the Legislature’s intentions with HB3214.

A “No” vote on HB3214 could accomplish this goal.

Joe Pate
President, ExpoSure Shows