

LETTER TO CITY LEGISLATORS

Sample

<Date>

The Honorable <Name>

<Address>

<City, state, zip code>

Dear <Mayor or Council Member> <Name>:

On behalf of <your group's name>, I ask that you help institute an ordinance prohibiting the display of wild animals in our community. Such legislation will serve the interests of public safety, efficient use of taxpayer funds, and the humane treatment of animals.

Exotic animals used in traveling shows live miserable lives. Treated as nothing more than equipment, animals are packed and unpacked in an endless string of exhibitions. Forced to endure large and often boisterous crowds, the animals live in a perpetual state of discomfort, frustration, and fear. Focused on the running of the display (and making money), the animal handler often neglects the most basic needs of the animals, including rest, food, and water. re often neglected. These conditions can and do lead to tragedy.

In one widely publicized incident, an elephant named Tyke rampaged in Honolulu, killing her trainer and injuring more than a dozen spectators before police killed her. Many lawsuits were filed against the circus, the police department, and the city of Honolulu. A tiger cub belonging to Safari Zoological Park, a zoo that hauls animals around to schools, festivals, and store promotions, bit the throat of a 5-year-old child in Kansas. The tiger was killed the next day. A chimpanzee fiercely bit a girl on the hand after posing for a photograph at a Blockbuster store in Tennessee. The girl's parents filed a \$50,000 lawsuit. Enclosed is a partial list of other dangerous incidents involving elephants, bears, big cats, and primates that further illustrates our concerns. The liability risks to <city's name> are real.

As you may know, our city spends an estimated <insert figures> to license, inspect, and regulate animal acts. Meanwhile, <city's name> is lacking in <Examples: adequate school supplies, daycare centers, senior programs, police protection>. Many needed programs would benefit from funds freed up should an ordinance banning the display of wild animals be enacted.

Please let me know when we can schedule a meeting to discuss these issues. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

<Your name>

<Your title>

Enclosures: videotape and related information