

**Testimony of Don Moore, Director
Requesting an Amendment to House Bill 2576
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
April 24, 2017**



As the state's #1 paid visitor attraction, the Oregon Zoo is proud of the experience we offer our visitors and of our efforts to provide a healthy and stimulating environment for the animals that have been entrusted to our care.

However, you may not realize that the actual mission of the Oregon Zoo is to create a better future for wildlife. We pursue this mission through a number of efforts that may not be apparent to the average zoo visitor. These activities fall into several categories ranging from cutting-edge animal welfare, husbandry and veterinary work to species preservation and conservation efforts (including breeding activities as part of national Species Survival Plans) to research and education.

As a public agency, the Zoo does not take positions on ballot measures. However, given our mission, you will not be surprised to learn that we strongly support the intent of Measure 100, which the voters overwhelmingly approved last fall to ban trafficking in wildlife and animal parts, focused on a list of particularly vulnerable species. (Metro's Council President Tom Hughes happened to be a chief petitioner for Measure 100.)

We believe the changes to Measure 100 in HB 2576 are generally consistent with the intent of the measure. However, in amending the measure to ensure that it allows bona fide scientific or educational institutions to conduct important research, education and conservation work, the current version of HB 2576 inadvertently affects the ability of the Oregon Zoo to continue these activities.

The problem arises with the addition of a definition of "bona fide scientific or educational institution" in the bill. Because this definition does not include zoos and aquariums accredited by the national Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), we are concerned that **the A-Engrossed bill could prohibit many of the activities we routinely engage in at the Oregon Zoo for the purposes of species conservation, veterinary care, research and education.**

That's why we have worked with the bill's sponsor to develop an amendment to add zoos and aquariums accredited by the AZA to the definition of "bona fide scientific or educational institution."

Linking this provision to AZA accreditation is important. The AZA works with accredited zoos and aquariums to develop science-based policies and protocols like Species Survival Plans and a Responsible Population Management Policy.

Products that are typically transferred to, from, and among AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums, universities and other institutions for medical, conservation, research and education purposes include biomaterials such as blood, gametes, tissues, organs and even whole organ systems or bodies.

To be clear, zoos accredited by the AZA will not be selling or trading living or dead animals, or their parts or products, for the species listed. Part of the goal of efforts like Measure 100 is to eliminate the financial value of endangered species in the first place, as the Oregon Zoo and other modern AZA-accredited zoos have done. However, the Zoo might donate or loan such animals or their parts for the conservation, veterinary, education and research purposes I have described.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that HB 2576 be amended to add zoos and aquariums accredited by the AZA to the definition of "bona fide scientific or educational institution."

Thank you very much for considering this amendment. I would be happy to provide more information upon request.