

Submitter: Susan Costello  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: HB3214

HB 3214 must be passed.

This bill does not interfere with any educational shows, basic animal transport, and will not impact jobs held by circus owners.

6 states and nearly 150 other localities in 37 states have passed various restrictions governing the use of wild animals in circuses and traveling shows, including in Oregon, Multnomah and Benton counties.

Animals in circuses suffer tremendous physical, psychological, and emotional trauma. Elephants, lions, tigers, and chimpanzees are taken away from their mothers at a very young age and brought up in solitary confinement where they cannot exhibit natural behaviors.

Bullhooks, whips, tight collars, muzzles, electric prods, and other archaic tools are used to physically punish the animals and make them do tricks.

As well as using direct physical contact, circus animals are often forced to go without food and water when they haven't performed well. The deprivation of these basic necessities combined with the long-term physical mistreatment and abuse of these animals is done to keep them afraid and submissive.

Traveling circus animals spend 96 percent of their life behind bars and in small cages.

The average circus travels for 11 months of the year, and during this time, the animals are all confined to tiny cages, only just big enough to stand and turn around in, where they are forced to defecate in the same space they sleep.

Statistics show that the average time that the animals

are caged is in excess of 26 hours, and in some cases, it can be as long as 75 or 100 hours.

Circus animals can develop stress-related illnesses, depression, anxiety, and extreme frustration when they are subjected to these conditions.

Although the U.S. does offer protection for circus animals under the United States Animal Welfare Act, there are only about 120 Department of Agriculture inspectors assigned to monitor 12,000 circus-related facilities, in addition to laboratories, puppy mills, and zoos, leaving the animals exposed to rampant abuse. Despite the lack of oversight, every major circus that uses animals has been cited for violating the minimal standards of care set by the AWA.

In more than 35 dangerous incidents since 2000, elephants have bolted from circuses, rampaged through streets, crashed into buildings, attacked members of the public, and killed and injured handlers.

Additionally, since 1990, there have been more than 123 documented attacks on humans by captive large cats in the United States, 13 of which resulted in fatal injuries.

Thank you for passing HB 3214 and having empathy for these animals.