

Submitter: Noah Florence
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB3214

Oregon House Bill 3214 (HB3214) is sponsored by Representatives Zach Hudson and David Gomberg. HB3214 prohibits using certain animals (list below and even includes tortoises and small monitors) in “traveling animal acts,” which will include the educational outreach programs provided by many animal keepers. It authorizes the forfeiture of animals used in violations. Punishment is a maximum of six months imprisonment, a \$2,500 fine, or both, plus legal seizure of your animals.

Regardless of what species are involved, this bill is unnecessary, redundant, and a waste of Oregon tax dollars. Animal welfare laws are already in place and measures like this bill only punish responsible citizens instead of actually penalizing criminals. The unintended consequences are many. It is a ban on taking a Greek tortoise into a classroom for an educational program about turtles and tortoises. It is a ban on taking a dwarf monitor lizard into a library or to a Scout troop meeting for an educational show discussing reptiles.

“Traveling animal act” means a performance of an animal to which the animal is transported. This qualifies all outreach and educational programs that are not on-site where the animal is permanently housed. They would all be banned.

While the definition for “performance” may seem to disqualify general educational outreach programs, there still remains ambiguity and enforcement could certainly take place at the whim of any enforcement officer as terms are open for interpretation at will. For example “trick” is not defined so an animal standing on its back legs to get a treat, walking to a red laser dot, or jumping from one person’s shoulder to another are tricks and these are commonly seen in educational and outreach programs. Also, a performance includes any program in which an animal “entertains or amuses an audience.” Most are entertained and amused simply by having the incredible experience of seeing animals in person!

Please note that “education programs” are only exempt if you qualify with an entity included in the below exemption list. We have seen misinformation on this being posted on social media.

The only exemptions are accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), or Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), along with a 12-hour of travel exemption for state-licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers, certain academic/medical/research facilities, veterinarians, and falconers.