

Mar. 27, 2009

## Letters to the Editor

<SNIP>

### Empty promises

This is in response to the March 6 letter by Nevada U.S. Sen. John Ensign titled "Ensign recognizes PFC Jon Witney":

Sen. Ensign praises U.S soldier's heroic efforts in Germany and thanks his mom for bringing up such a fine man. He writes, "This nation continues to be the beacon of freedom and hope" and "Please do not hesitate to contact my office if we can ever be of assistance."

I sure hope Ensign means it this time, as in my experience his words are just empty promises.

In 2003, this senator co-sponsored and heavily supported a federal bill "Captive Wildlife safety Act" that prevents people like me, private, non-commercial owner of exotic cats, to ever cross state lines and take my animals with me to another state, not even in the case of medical or natural disaster emergency.

I would have to leave my beloved pets behind; if I don't, I am committing a felony.

Is this the freedom he is talking about? Our freedom to choose what kind of pet to keep, love and protect? Be a felon if I want to save my animals in an emergency situation?

If I ever want to move, I have to get rid of my pets or commit a felony, thanks to Ensign.

I met a soldier; he's a pet reptile owner, and he was very angry coming home from Iraq, fighting for other people's freedoms and risking his life, to come home to the USA and be told what animals he can or can't own.

In fact, my fiancé Scott Shoemaker is a former soldier, and it is hard for him to comprehend that while U.S. soldiers are losing lives and limbs in the wars protecting other people's freedoms, our own government at home is busy taking away the freedoms of its own citizens away every day.

Actually, there is another bill in the U.S. House and Senate, "Captive Primate Safety Act," which would add monkeys to the list of animals that cannot be transported across state lines. Sen. Ensign already signed as a co-sponsor for this one, too. The only difference between the big cat and monkey versions is that monkey owners would be allowed to take their pets across the state lines for medical treatment. The

interesting thing is, humans are primates, too. Monkeys and apes are called non-human primates.

Both times, in 2003 and now, I tried to schedule a local meeting with Sen. Ensign, hoping to educate him and change his mind to represent the freedom-loving people of Nevada. Both times I failed to get a response or meeting.

Why should I take his promises to others seriously? Why is our senator wasting time and taxpayers' money supporting monkey bills in these times of economic crisis? Are 10-pound pet monkeys really a national threat in his eyes?

Besides, why is the federal government banning non-commercial activity, such as transporting personal pets, which are property under the U.S. Constitution?

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