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## **Exotic animal owners groups unite and fight back in the wake of recent attempts to ban or curb private ownership of exotic animals.**

*"In the last 10-16 years, 1.5 person on average is killed yearly in the USA by captive reptile, 1 by captive big cat, 0.81 by captive elephant, 0.125 by captive bear and 0 by captive non-human primate," reports Zuzana Kukol, a Las Vegas tiger trainer and REXANO co-founder.*

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Las Vegas, NV, April 18, 2007- Many states recently introduced unfair legislation banning or severely limiting private ownership of exotic animals under the guise of public safety, even though the facts show properly cared for exotic animals are not a danger to the general public. To fight back, many animal alliances have been formed. "Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership" (REXANO) has a website [www.rexano.org](http://www.rexano.org) providing free tools, statistics and latest information to fight against the proposed unfair legislation. "In the last 10-16 years, 1.5 person on average is killed yearly in the USA by captive reptile, 1 by captive big cat, 0.81 by captive elephant, 0.125 by captive bear and 0 by captive non-human primate," reports Zuzana Kukol, a Las Vegas tiger trainer and REXANO co-founder. "For comparison, 45,000 people die each year in traffic accidents, 47 by lightning and 1,600 by falling from stairs."

"Our statistical analysis of the data disproves the claim that exotic animals in captivity are a threat to public safety. No uninvolved public has been killed in the USA since 1990 as a result of a captive big cat, primate, bear, elephant or reptile at large," adds Scott Shoemaker, a REXANO co-founder. "The majority of fatalities are to owners, trainers or people voluntarily visiting the property where the animals are kept."

The latest victim of the uninformed legislators is the Oregon state, which already has adequate regulation regarding private ownership of exotics. According to Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 609: "it is the policy of this state that regulation place no more burden upon the keepers of exotic animals than is required to accomplish the purposes expressed in this section".

The House Bill 3437 would in effect ban (for no reason) the private future ownership of exotic animals except few exemptions of private groups, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and non profit wildlife sanctuaries. AZA is a private group for big rich zoos, like AAA is for car owners, but nobody is demanding that you must be a member of AAA to own a car, but unlike AAA, AZA costs few thousands to join.. To be exempted as a wildlife sanctuary, non profit IRS status is needed; this is a tax status and has nothing to do with public safety or animal welfare. Exempting selected private individuals or groups appears to be illegal under US, as well as Oregon Constitution.

"I am wondering if legislators might be unwittingly assaulting the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, 'Equal protection of the law', by introducing and passing unfair bills while exempting private groups, AZA and tax exempt wildlife sanctuaries," Kukol ponders. "This is unAmerican.

Constitution of Oregon 2005 Edition , ARTICLE I "BILL OF RIGHTS" Section 20 clearly says: "Equality of privileges and immunities of citizens. No law shall be passed granting to any citizen or class of citizens privileges, or immunities, which, upon the same terms, shall not equally belong to all citizens."

REXANO is committed to protect the rights of animal owners and supports responsible private ownership of exotic animals in any form, be it non commercial pet or sanctuary, as well as commercial breeder or exhibitor.

"Even people who don't own animals should realize that every time a new law is passed, the

government powers and bureaucracy are growing and our personal freedoms shrinking," warns Kukul.

Another state soon to have hearings on their anti exotic bill (HB45) is Ohio: "Animals are personal property; and we oppose legislation that restricts the private ownership or use of animals, or that inhibits free trade of any animal provided it meets Ohio Department of Agriculture testing and import requirements," adds Polly Britton, Secretary of the Ohio Association of Animal Owners, [www.oaao.us](http://www.oaao.us).

"As long as animal welfare and public safety laws are followed, the private ownership of all animals should be protected in the USA," says Shoemaker

**About REXANO**

Free web resource with statistics to fight anti exotic animal legislation.

Submitted by [REXANO](#)