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More dirty politics: Federal government attack on pet monkeys ...

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REXANO Editorial by Zuzana Kukol, www.REXANO.org

Las Vegas, NV, August 1, 2007—Once again, dirty sneaky politicians are attacking exotic pet owners with reintroduction of two federal bills, *Captive Primate Safety Act* (S 1498 IS, Introduced in Senate) and (HR 2964 IH, Introduced in House).

http://www.rexano.org/DA_FEDERAL.htm

These 'monkey bills' are supposed: "To amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit the import, export, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species, and for other purposes." (<http://www.fws.gov/le/LawsTreaties/Lacey.pdf>).

According to the Fish and Wildlife (FWS) Lacey act website

(http://www.fws.gov/laws/laws_digest//lacey.html):

- "Under this law, it is unlawful to import, export, sell, acquire, or purchase fish, wildlife or plants taken, possessed, transported, or sold: 1) in violation of U.S. or Indian law, or 2) in interstate or foreign commerce involving any fish, wildlife, or plants taken possessed or sold in violation of State or foreign law.
- The law covers all fish and wildlife and their parts or products, and plants protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and those protected by State law. Commercial guiding and outfitting are considered to be a sale under the provisions of the Act. Felony criminal sanctions are provided for violations involving imports or exports, or violations of a commercial nature in which the value of the wildlife is in excess of \$350."

To simplify and explain in plain English, Lacey Act Amendment of 1981 makes it illegal to sell, buy, transport or acquired any plant, fish or wildlife (or parts of thereof) that were acquired illegally in a commercial activity.

So what does all of this have to do with pet monkeys and pet exotic cats ? If these exotic pets were acquired legally, owners should have nothing to worry about? (Big cats

were included in 2003 version named "Captive wildlife safety act", but the law was not implemented due to an error that would be fixed in the 2007 primate version.)

The problem is in the text of the bill: "...to prohibit the import, export, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species, and for other purposes."

The key is in the words "**transportation**", "**acquisition**" and "**for other purposes**". Even though the original purpose of the Lacey amendment was to have a better enforcement and stiffer penalties for people involved in wildlife violations relating to ILLEGALLY obtained wildlife, this new bill, thanks to the disclaimer 'for other purposes' would make it illegal for legally obtained pet non human primate or exotic cat to travel or move with their loving owners to another state. **Our federal government is attempting to make current legal owners of exotic cats and primates to become wildlife criminals if they take their legally obtained pet on a trip across the state lines, or move to another state.**

After all, being dedicated to our pets and not dumping them is the responsible thing to do, right? We have wildlife sanctuaries screaming that they are full. Yet, we have our own government passing laws that make criminals out of loving owners if they decide to keep their cherished pet and take them to another exotic animal friendly state with them. **The other 'deadly' option is to relinquish their happy pet and thus possibly have them euthanized since sanctuaries are full and there is no other place these pets could go if the owners are forced to give them up.**

Even if you don't own exotic animals, think about it. Considering that shelters are euthanizing domestic animals because there are not enough homes to adopt them all, how would you feel if the federal government passed laws that would make it illegal for you to take your domestic dog or cat with you across the state lines, thus forcing you to keep your pet illegally or take it to a shelter where it would likely be euthanized? If they do it to our exotic cats and primates, what would stop them from doing it in the future to other animals and continue with their dirty politics as usual?

Why do our politicians hate our animals so much that they are sentencing them to death?