

WINNING ENTRY OF REXANO CONTEST, *Deadline July 4, 2009:*

Why should HSUS, Humane Society of the United States, NOT be writing laws for animal owners? *By Anonymous*

Dear Honorable _____:

I strongly believe in the right to legal, responsible ownership of exotic animals. It is my opinion that large exotic felines and other potentially dangerous animals should be under the care of experienced and trained individuals, who are able to provide a safe, secure environment for these animals and prevent risk to the animal and public. Banning animals is not the answer. There are alternatives to making animals illegal, such as proper education of exotic animal owners in proper care and handling of these species, plus educating the public on them as well. This way is the right way. Banning is evil.

It is not up to HSUS to write laws. It's up to our elected officials to write laws with consent with their constituents. We need to make sure that experienced and trained private individuals are able to provide a safe, secure environment for these animals and prevent risk to the animal and to the public. There are training facilities in the US that offer certification courses to handle these animals. I encourage those who want to partake in these activities to take the courses before buying and taking care of an exotic animal.

I am aware of the injuries and deaths that may have occurred due to the keeping of exotic pets. But please realize that the biggest killer of all besides disease and drugs is man himself, or the automobile. More people have been killed by cars than tigers. These animal attacks, though very unfortunate and very sad, could have been prevented. Every single case that I have studied these attacks, and in each instance, they all could have been prevented if the owner knew the rules about keeping and handling their animals and watch for the "signals" the animals show. Just because a tiger bit off some poor kids arm is not because it's the tiger's fault, it's the keepers' inability to read the tiger and allowing a child close to the animal which is a huge no no. In that instance, it was the keeper's fault. Every animal, even humans, can be unpredictable if you don't know what to look for, so that's even true with pet dogs.

So if it's the keepers fault, and they failed to keep his or her animal safely, then they should be prosecuted. But why should a person who owns exotic animals in a very responsible and loving manner, and has never had a problem, who lives clear on the other side of the state, have her animal taken away because of that? If my dog bit and killed someone, I would probably end up in jail and my dog destroyed. Well if this law was for dogs, then everyone's dogs in the US would be taken away. And those people who want a puppy would have their hopes and dreams dashed. Same goes for those people who own exotic or large carnivores.

Did you know that cheetahs have been proven that they can be domesticated by either 1 or 2 generations born in captivity? It's too bad that humans didn't know that fact as much. This was done through a scientific study and private ownership!! Know they are amongst one of the most rarest animals on the planet and illegal to keep. They are also one of the best behaved exotics to keep. Have you heard of a person getting fatally attacked by a cheetah in the USA? I have zero information on this. So why is it then private citizens, who want to see this breed of cat survive, cannot keep them in a professional and responsible manner Why? Why can we not educate other folks on this cat or other animals in an environment that is safe and interactive, where people can see the animals move, instead of lie around all day in a pen at the zoo with no keeper around to tell them about the animal. Ask yourself why Sea World or other similar animal attractions attract so many more people than zoo's? Interaction leads to education that leads to preservation, which conquers extinction. I can't tell you enough on how much I and many other private owners and animal handlers/trainers have learned from Interacting with many kinds of animals. More that what you can read in the library or watch on TV. Volumes more.

Do you know how to comprehend what a horse may be telling you if you are around him? Would you like to? How about a lion? Or how about a deer, a bear, or maybe even your pet dog. This may sound really whacked out, but private owners have been doing this for years. The best example of a person who has spent his lifetime understanding the language of animals is Monty Roberts. I saw a video of him training a wild mustang stallion. In less than a few hours, he was able to get a person to ride that horse safely without bucking or putting the rider into a hazardous situation. I have seen handlers play. I mean PLAY with a 1200lb Kodiak bear. How did the trainer survive the play without getting even so much as a scratch on him? These trainers both understand the animals "language." This was accomplished through years of observation and study. This has also been done with big cats and other animals through responsible private ownership. These studies have also reduced the amount of animal attacks in the wild especially from bears. People who live in bear country are being educated by folks who understand the psyche and the language of the bears, so they learn how to avoid confrontations. Again, this was initiated by people who privately owned these animals and not by zoos. So there are a very good reasons not to ban exotics, but maybe regulate them better!

People say that exotic animals pose a huge risk to the public. Well let me put things into perspective. According to the National Safety Council, Animals pose the lowest risk compared to other objects and substances.

Compared to other objects, animals cause the lowest risk of injury or death.

From the National Safety Council

<http://www.nsc.org/lrs/statinfo/odds.htm>

What are the odds of dying?

The table below was prepared in response to frequent inquiries, especially from the media, asking questions such as, "What are the odds of being killed by lightning?" or "What are the chances of dying in a plane crash?"

The table has four columns. The first column gives the manner of injury such as motor-vehicle crash, fall, fire, etc. The second column gives the total number of deaths nationwide due to the manner of injury in 2002 (the latest year for which data are available). The third column gives the odds of dying in one year due to the manner of injury. The fourth column gives the lifetime odds of dying from the manner of injury. Statements about the odds or chances of dying from a given cause of death may be made as follows:

- The odds of dying from (manner of injury) in 2002 were 1 in (value given in the one-year odds column).
- The life-time odds of dying from (manner of injury) for a person born in 2002 were 1 in (value given in the lifetime odds column).

For example, referring to the first line of the table below:

- The odds of dying from an injury in 2002 were 1 in 1,755.
- The lifetime odds of dying from an injury for a person born in 2002 were 1 in 23.

The odds given below are statistical averages over the whole U.S. population and do not necessarily reflect the chances of death for a particular person from a particular external cause. Any individual's odds of dying from various external causes are affected by the activities in which they participate, where they live and drive, what kind of work they do, and other factors.

Source: National Safety Council estimates based on data from National Center for Health Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau. Deaths are classified on the basis of the Tenth Revision of the World Health

Organization's "The International Classification of Diseases" (ICD). Numbers following titles refer to External Cause of Morbidity and Mortality classifications in ICD-10.. One year odds are approximated by dividing the 2002 population (287,941,220) by the number of deaths. Lifetime odds are approximated by dividing the one-year odds by the life expectancy of a person born in 2002 (77.3 years)..

Odds of Death Due to Injury, United States, 2002

Type of Accident or Manner of Injury	Deaths	One Year Odds	Lifetime Odds
All External Causes of Mortality, V01-Y89, *U01, *U03	164,112	1,755	23
Deaths Due to Unintentional (Accidental) Injuries, V01-X59, Y85-Y86	106,742	2,698	35
Transport Accidents, V01-V99, Y85	48,366	5,953	77
Pedestrian, V01-V09	6,091	47,273	612
Pedalcyclist, V10-V19	767	375,412	4,857
Motorcycle rider, V20-V29	3,215	89,562	1,159
Occupant of three-wheeled motor vehicle, V30-V39	21	13,711,487	177,380
Car occupant, V40-V49	16,337	17,625	228
Occupant of pick-up truck or van, V50-V59	4,286	67,182	869
Occupant of heavy transport vehicle, V60-V69	456	631,450	8,169
Bus occupant, V70-V79	43	6,696,307	86,628
Animal rider or occupant of animal-drawn vehicle, V80	118	2,440,180	31,568
Occupant of railway train or railway vehicle, V81	28	10,283,615	133,035
Occupant of streetcar, V82	4	71,985,305	931,246
Other and unspecified land transport accidents, V83-V89	15,100	19,069	247
Occupant of special industrial vehicle, V83	15	19,196,081	248,332
Occupant of special agricultural vehicle, V84	149	1,932,491	25,000
Occupant of special construction vehicle, V85	32	8,998,163	116,406
Occupant of all-terrain or other off-road motor vehicle, V86	776	371,058	4,800
Other and unspecified person, V87-V89	14,128	20,381	264
Water transport accidents, V90-V94	617	466,679	6,037
Drowning, V90, V92	413	697,194	9,019
Other and unspecified injuries, V91, V93-V94	204	1,411,477	18,260
Air and space transport accidents, V95-V97	653	440,951	5,704
Other and unspecified transport accidents and sequelae, V98-V99, Y85	630	457,050	5,913
Other specified transport accidents, V98	12	143,970,610	1,862,492

Unspecified transport accident, V99	1	287,941,220	3,742,983
Nontransport Unintentional (Accidental) Injuries, W00-X59, Y86	58,376	4,933	64
Falls, W00-W19	16,257	17,712	229
Fall on same level from slipping, tripping, and stumbling, W01	646	445,729	5,766
Other fall on same level, W00, W02-W03, W18	3,610	79,762	1,032
Fall involving bed, chair, other furniture, W06-W08	785	366,804	4,745
Fall on and from stairs and steps, W10	1,598	180,188	2,331
Fall on and from ladder or scaffolding, W11-W12	406	709,215	9,175
Fall from out of or through building or structure, W13	557	516,950	6,688
Other fall from one level to another, W09, W14-W17	766	375,902	4,863
Other and unspecified fall, W04-W05, W19	7,889	36,499	472
Exposure to inanimate mechanical forces, W20-W49	2,727	105,589	1,366
Struck by or striking against object, W20-W22	864	333,265	4,311
Caught between objects, W23	115	2,503,837	32,391
Contact with machinery, W24, W30-W31	652	441,628	5,713
Contact with sharp objects, W25-W29	105	2,742,297	35,476
Firearms discharge, W32-W34	762	377,876	4,888
Explosion and rupture of pressurized devices, W35-W38	27	10,664,490	137,962
Fireworks discharge, W39	5	57,588,244	744,997
Explosion of other materials, W40	137	2,101,761	27,190
Foreign body entering through skin or natural orifice, W44-W45	23	12,519,183	161,956
Other and unspecified inanimate mechanical forces, W41-W43, W49	37	7,782,195	100,675
Exposure to animate mechanical forces, W50-W64	144	1,999,592	25,868
Struck by or against another person, W50-W52	26	11,074,662	143,269
Bitten or struck by dog, W54	18	15,966,734	206,944
Bitten or struck by other mammals, W53, W55	75	3,839,216	49,666
Bitten or stung by nonvenomous insect and other arthropods,	13	22,149,325	286,537

W57			
Bitten or crushed by other reptiles, W59	0	---	---
Other and unspecified animate mechanical forces, W56, W58, W60, W64	12	23,995,102	310,415
Accidental drowning and submersion, W65-W74	3,447	83,534	1,081
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into bath-tub, W65-W66	352	818,015	10,582
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into swimming-pool, W67-W68	636	452,738	5,857
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into natural water, W69-W70	1,325	217,314	2,811
Other and unspecified drowning and submersion, W73-W74	1,134	253,916	3,285
Other accidental threats to breathing, W75-W84	5,517	52,192	675
Accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed, W75	509	565,700	7,318
Other accidental hanging and strangulation, W76	297	969,499	12,542
Threat to breathing due to cave-in, falling earth and other substances, W77	57	5,051,600	65,351
Inhalation of gastric contents, W78	369	780,329	10,095
Inhalation and ingestion of food causing obstruction of respiratory tract, W79	819	351,577	4,548
Inhalation and ingestion of other objects causing obstruction of respiratory tract, W80	2,940	97,939	1,267
Confined to or trapped in a low-oxygen environment, W81	19	15,154,801	196,052
Other and unspecified threats to breathing, W83-W84	507	567,931	7,347
Exposure to electric current, radiation, temperature, and pressure, W85-W99	454	634,232	8,205
Electric transmission lines, W85	109	2,641,663	34,174
Other and unspecified electric current, W86-W87	322	894,227	11,568
Radiation, W88-W91	0	---	---
Excessive heat or cold of man-made origin, W92-W93	10	28,794,122	372,498
High and low air pressure and changes in air pressure, W94	13	22,149,325	286,537
Other and unspecified man-made environmental factors,	0	---	---

W99			
Exposure to smoke, fire and flames, X00-X09	3,159	91,149	1,179
Uncontrolled fire in building or structure, X00	2,533	113,676	1,471
Uncontrolled fire not in building or structure, X01	53	5,432,853	70,283
Controlled fire in building or structure, X02	35	8,226,892	106,428
Controlled fire not in building or structure, X03	30	9,598,041	124,166
Ignition of highly flammable material, X04	71	4,055,510	52,465
Ignition or melting of nightwear, X05	13	22,149,325	286,537
Ignition or melting of other clothing and apparel, X06	104	2,768,666	35,817
Other and unspecified smoke fire and flames, X08-X09	320	899,816	11,641
Contact with heat and hot substances, X10-X19	102	2,822,953	36,519
Contact with hot tap-water, X11	40	7,198,531	93,125
Other and unspecified heat and hot substances, X10, X12-X19	62	4,644,213	60,080
Contact with venomous animals and plants, X20-X29	76	3,788,700	49,013
Contact with venomous snakes and lizards, X20	3	95,980,407	1,241,661
Contact with venomous spiders, X21	10	28,794,122	372,498
Contact with hornets, wasps and bees, X23	54	5,332,245	68,981
Contact with other and unspecified venomous animal or plant, X22, X24-X29	9	31,993,469	413,887
Exposure to forces of nature, X30-X39	1,219	236,211	3,056
Exposure to excessive natural heat, X30	350	822,689	10,643
Exposure to excessive natural cold, X31	646	445,729	5,766
Lightning, X33	66	4,362,746	56,439
Earthquake and other earth movements, X34-X36	31	9,288,426	120,161
Cataclysmic storm, X37	63	4,570,496	59,127
Flood, X38	9	31,993,469	413,887
Exposure to other and unspecified forces of nature, X32, X39	54	5,332,245	68,981
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to noxious substances, X40-X49	17,550	16,407	212
Nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics, and antirheumatics, X40	222	1,297,033	16,779

Antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism, and psychotropic drugs n.e.c., X41	1,024	281,193	3,638
Narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens] n.e.c., X42	8,264	34,843	451
Other and unspecified drugs, medicaments, and biologicals, X43-X44	6,884	41,828	541
Alcohol, X45	355	811,102	10,493
Gases and vapours, X46-X47	691	416,702	5,391
Other and unspecified chemicals and noxious substances, X48-X49	110	2,617,647	33,863
Overexertion, travel and privation, X50-X57	128	2,249,541	29,101
Accidental exposure to other and unspecified factors and sequelae, X58-X59, Y86	7,596	37,907	490
Intentional self-harm, X60-X84, Y87.0, *U03	31,655	9,096	118
Intentional self-poisoning, X60-X69	5,486	52,487	679
Intentional self-harm by hanging, strangulation, and suffocation, X70	6,462	44,559	576
Intentional self-harm by firearm, X72-X74	17,108	16,831	218
Other and unspecified means and sequelae, X71, X75-X84, Y87.0, *U03	2,599	110,789	1,433
Assault, X85-Y09, Y87.1, *U01	17,638	16,325	211
Assault by firearm, X93-X95	11,829	24,342	315
Assault by sharp object, X99	2,074	138,834	1,796
Other and unspecified means and sequelae, X85-X92, X96-X98, Y00-Y09, Y87.1, *U01	3,735	77,093	997
Event of undetermined intent, Y10-Y34, Y87.2, Y89.9	4,830	56,615	771
Poisoning, Y10-Y19	3,336	86,313	1,117
Hanging, strangulation, and suffocation, Y20	133	2,164,972	28,007
Drowning and submersion, Y21	259	1,111,742	14,382
Firearm discharge, Y22-Y24	243	1,184,943	15,329
Exposure to smoke, fire, and flames, Y26	99	2,908,497	37,626
Falling, jumping, or pushed from a high place, Y30	103	2,795,546	36,165
Other and unspecified means and sequelae, Y25, Y27-Y29, Y31-Y34, Y87.2, Y89.9	657	438,267	5,670
Legal intervention, Y35, Y89.0	384	749,847	9,700
Legal intervention involving firearm discharge, Y35.0	300	959,804	12,417
Legal execution, Y35.5	67	4,297,630	55,597
Other and unspecified means and sequelae, Y35.1-Y35.4, Y35.6-Y35.7, Y89.0	17	16,937,719	219,117
Operations of war and sequelae, Y36, Y89.1	20	14,397,061	186,249
Complications of medical and surgical care and sequelae, Y40-Y84, Y88.0-Y88.3	2,843	101,281	1,310

These animal banning laws are so unconstitutional, unjust, unfair and just really makes me sick to death and above all is Un- American.

It has also come to my attention that there are certain Animal Rights Activist Groups who are forcing these banning laws on states. One of which is well known, called PETA. Please be it known that this group admitted giving contributions to Eco-Terrorist groups like the ALF and ELF who have done many malicious deeds. Do you want that on your conscience? Its like basically giving them a green light to continue their damage and rampage. I know I wouldn't want that on my conscience. I think your constituents would absolutely agree.

If I was a judge I would strike any bills down banning animals of any kind as being unconstitutional, and not protecting the rights of Americans.

I ask you in the strongest terms possible that you reverse, repeal, and/or veto any current or future animal banning laws. Instead of banning make laws that protect the rights of owners and restrict these large carnivores to professional handlers. That's fair and just. Banning isn't. Please keep the above in mind when any laws are placed in front of your legislative body. These laws, banning exotic animals, are restricting our god given right to own, take care of, love, and be with these wonderful creatures. This is so that others may share, learn, love and to take care of these animals correctly and responsibly.

I highly appreciate your time in this matter. I have many friends who have large carnivores and they love their big cats as much as they love their human family members. The cats in turn do understand that and reciprocate that love back. To separate the cats and other animals from their human family members causes unnecessary stress on the animals, which can lead to disease and premature death. That's really unfair.

Should you need further information why this legislation needs further reconsideration, I can provide some very good reasons for you. I also ask that you share this letter with your legislative body. Please vote no.

I look forward to hear back from you.

Thank You Very Much.

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<http://www.cafepress.com/REXANO.177931372>



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