

Feline Conservation Federation Opposes Haley's Act, Federal Legislation that Criminalizes Public Contact with Exotic Felines

The Feline Conservation Federation, a non-profit organization representing licensed educators, exhibitors, sanctuaries, zoos, breeders and responsible owners points out that this bill is totally unnecessary because Haley's untimely death was entirely the result of a willful violation of already established regulations.

([PRWeb](#)) August 3, 2006 -- On July 26, 2006, U.S. Representative Jim Ryun (R-KS) introduced H.R. 5909 in the U.S. House of Representatives. Also called Haley's Act, the bill prohibits anyone from touching felines such as cougars and tigers.

The bill is patterned after the hysterical Kansas legislation passed in reaction to the sensationalized death of Haley Hilderbrand. An adult tiger killed the Altamont teenager during a high school senior photo shoot at a federally licensed sanctuary.

Haley's Act would criminalize any public contact with felines like lions, tigers or cougars. It proposes fines of up to \$10,000 to licensed exhibitors that allow anyone to bottle feed, or pet, or play with baby felines.

The Feline Conservation Federation, a non-profit organization representing licensed educators, exhibitors, sanctuaries, zoos, breeders and responsible owners points out that this bill is totally unnecessary because Haley's untimely death was entirely the result of a willful violation of already established regulations.

FCF Director Lynn Culver states, "Animal rights fanatics have shamefully exploited this tragedy and taken advantage of the Haley family and their feelings of guilt and grief. This is a standard animal rights tactic that promotes hysteria and is an extreme disservice to the animals who's welfare they claim to represent. "

Established USDA policy requires proper caging or barriers when exhibiting tiger, lion, cougar, cheetah, leopard, or jaguar older than 16 weeks.

Federal regulations also prohibit public contact with adult exotic cats, even when restrained.

Culver stated, "The tiger that killed Haley was a 700-pound, full-grown animal. The exhibitor was violating USDA rules created to prevent this tragedy. This is no reason to deny everyone in America the privilege of touching a baby tiger or cougar."

The FCF supports educational exhibiting for conservation awareness. Educators use young felines as good-will ambassadors to raise public awareness of the tragic destruction to our natural world.

The FCF notes that media hype and animal rights fanatics can incite the public and legislators into overreacting to a rare incident.

In the past sixteen years, big cats have fatally mauled sixteen people. Most deaths or attacks are to professional



handlers or owners that have accepted the risks of their occupation.

The Feline Conservation Federation warns legislators not to fall prey to animal rights fanatics and media hype. Evelyn Shaw, FCF Legislative Director sums up their position with, "Haley's Act is waste of taxpayer dollars. Congress needs to properly fund the USDA and this agency can do the job."

###



Contact Information

Lynn Culver

FELINE CONSERVATION FEDERATION

<http://www.thefcf.org>

479-394-5235

Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).