

REXANO urges US Congress to stop wasting tax payers' money on monkey business

"I see no good reason to spend an estimated 4 million dollars annually on useless bills that solve nothing, and punish loving responsible monkey owners by prohibiting them from taking their pets across the state lines for any reason; household move, or even veterinary care."

(FAST PITCH PRESS) Date Released: 11/15/2007

LAS VEGAS, November 15, 2007 /FastPitch/ -- In response to the US Congress reintroduction of the House and Senate bills to regulate the private ownership of non human primates in the name of public safety, REXANO (Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership) is refuting claims that captive bred exotic animals are dangerous to the general public.

"In the USA, only one person dies per year as a result of attacks by captive big cats, 1.5 by captive reptiles, 0.81 by captive elephant, 0.125 by captive bear and 0 by captive non-human primate. In comparison, 45,000 people die each year in traffic accidents, 47 by lightning, and 1,600 by falling from stairs. We have detailed information on our website <http://www.rexano.org> about our ongoing fight against uninformed legislators and animal rights (AR) activists," says Zuzana Kukol, a Las Vegas tiger trainer and co-founder of REXANO.

REXANO is committed to protecting 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.

"Most of the wild habitat is disappearing. The only chance to save many animals from extinction is captive breeding in the private sector, who has the majority of available habitat," says Scott Shoemaker, co-founder of REXANO.

According to the 'CAPTIVE PRIMATE SAFETY ACT', S. 1498 proponents, "from January 1, 1995 to January 1, 2005, there were 132 incidents reported of human injury caused by captive primates or escapes of captive primates in the United States."

However, only 80 incidents were attributed to pet monkeys affected by this legislation, the rest of facilities would be exempt from this bill.

"If we are to believe their statistics, the pet primate incident rate is only 8 per year. We have been closely following all reports regarding pet monkey incidents, and most are simple escape/recapture or small band - aid injury situations", says Kukol. "I see no good reason to spend an estimated 4 million dollars annually on useless bills that solve nothing, and punish loving responsible monkey owners by prohibiting them from taking their pets across the state lines for any reason; household move, or even veterinary care."

"Nobody has been killed by captive non human primate attack in the USA" says Shoemaker. "The worst injury, a chimpanzee attack in California, happened in a licensed facility that would be exempt from this bill."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, sources, in 1996 alone, a total of 13 toy-related deaths among children and an estimated 116,800 nonfatal injuries requiring emergency department care were reported.

"Even people who don't own animals should realize that every time a new law is passed, the government powers and bureaucracy grow and our personal freedoms shrink," warns Kukol.

Similar Captive Wildlife Safety Act (CWSA) affecting exotic pet cats already passed, despite the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the agency responsible for implementing it, clearly stated:

"We recognize that a number of incidents involving big cat escapes and/or human injuries have been reported since December 2003. However, to our knowledge, many (if not most) of these incidents have involved owners who would be exempt under the CWSA and were not caused by, or related to, an act that would be prohibited under this law."

"Animals are personal property. 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," says Polly Britton, Secretary of the Ohio Association of Animal Owners, <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.

#####