

Dear Representative,

I understand that House Bill 45 has been scheduled for its first (sponsor testimony) hearing on Wednesday, April 18, 2007. As an animal owner who lives and does business in Ohio, I have many concerns with this legislation. Just to name a few:

1. The bill eliminates USDA exhibitors, puts them out of business.
2. Permit fees of up to \$100 per animal per yr with cap of \$1000 is **unreasonable**. (Current propagator fee is only \$40/yr. regardless of the number of animals.)
3. Chief of Div. of Wildlife can **keep** application fees and **deny** permit. This provision makes the bill appear to be a fundraiser for the Division of Wildlife.
4. If permit is denied, animals will most likely be killed, and owner must pay the cost of killing them. (Humane societies, zoos & sanctuaries aren't going to take them.)
5. Required newspaper notice of permits granted will tell every animal rights activist where to find and harass owners (we're not required to publish the rest of our personal property items, why should we be required to publish what animals we own?) This would be a huge invasion of privacy, in my opinion.
6. Yearly & interim unannounced inspections re: animal care duplicates Humane Society role + USDA.
7. The bill duplicates Ohio's animal welfare statutes re: abuse/neglect/abandonment that were just updated in April of 2003.
8. "Sanctuaries" would not be permitted to sell, breed or trade - deprives those property owners of their right to engage in commerce/conduct business, restricts their business, and the bill does not indicate what the penalty would be if they do breed the animals.
9. In existing Ohio law, animals are defined as personal property; this bill robs us of our personal property rights.

10. Discriminates against our exotic animals vs. traditional livestock and other (domestic) animals.

11. Div. of Wildlife does not promote agriculture, Ohio Dept of Agriculture does. All animals need to be regulated by ODA, not DOW. DOW views the exotic animal industry as competition, ODA views us as agriculture, and in current Ohio law, exotic animals are considered agricultural. **There is no reason for privately owned, non-native animals to be regulated by Ohio Div. of Wildlife.**

12. The bill exempts AZA facilities. AZA is a **private corporation**. This bill discriminates by exempting private clubs like AZA, sanctuaries & humane societies (all private corporations, most of them tax exempt). We, the tax-paying Ohio citizens owning these animals, are penalized and discriminated against by this bill.

I respectfully ask that should this bill come to a vote by the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, that your vote be "no".

Sincerely,

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