



# Hollywood Animals

*Exotic and Domestic Animals*

*Film • Television • Stage • Events*

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Committee on Personnel and Animal Welfare  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Opposition to Agenda Item #16-1357: Please include this letter into public record to be included in any hearing, studies, and or reports pertaining to this issue

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Eric Weld and my wife, Bettina Weld, and I own Hollywood Animals. We provide animals for special events and education (birthday parties; weddings; art installations, etc.) and for the film industry (please consider that an all-inclusive term for film, television, commercials, still shoots, etc.) Hollywood Animals has been in business since 1986 providing these animals, locally and around the world. We pride ourselves on providing the best care and husbandry for all of our animals - from adult big cats to our dogs, and everything in-between. We are professional animal trainers and are members of the Teamsters Local 399 Union. I sit on the Animal Handler, Trainer, and Wrangler subcommittee for the Local 399 union.

I submit to you that a ban on Exotic animals in the City of Los Angeles for all purposes except filming, and other noted exemptions, is not in the best interest of Los Angeles. At every event we have attended with a large cat, or other exotic animal, there has been nothing but praise and awe at the beauty and majesty of the animals we provide. Guests engage the trainers on site with questions about the animals, such as his/her normal daily routine, his/her living area, her contentment or happiness, etc. These conversations usually shift to their 'brethren' living in the wild and topics that affect these animals. The guests of these events truly appreciate these animals for who they are and I have yet to meet one person whose demeanor or words invoke the belief that they view these animals as "toys". This 'education through sight' leads to greater understanding of all animals and provides people with a platform to become properly educated and, hopefully, greater advocates for all animals.

As far as regulations and government oversight, we are inspected, monitored, and regulated by many government bodies. At the Federal level, the USDA/APHIS, whose Animal Welfare Act covers almost all animals and the proper care required for these animals, surprise inspects us and holds us to high regulations. At the State level, California Fish and Wildlife monitors our animal facility, animal husbandry, enclosures, and public safety. Los Angeles County monitors us for our animal menagerie and our dog kennel. They concern themselves with proper animal care, proper animal husbandry, and a properly maintained facility for public safety.

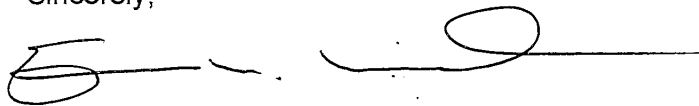
Lastly, we are permitted and monitored by the Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) whenever we come into the city of Los Angeles, or any other City that has a contract with

LAAS for animal enforcement. We have a very good working relationship with LAAS. They have a large file on Hollywood Animals - and any other professional animal company doing business in Los Angeles - including current copies of our USDA permit, our CA Fish and Wildlife permit, proof of our General Commercial Liability Policy, our Emergency Action Plan and Protocols, and contact details of our veterinarian for emergency purposes. Furthermore, LAAS vets each event for public safety and animal safety. LAAS' tasking of the animal company and the event source to provide critical information on each event has gotten stricter and better. These rules, regulations, and vetting processes are fair, and simple to be compliant with for anyone who is a professional animal company or a professional animal trainer.

In closing, taking away the ability to have exotic animals on display at events would limit the exposure people have to these magnificent creatures. It would furthermore limit their learning about these animals and cultivating visceral feelings about them and the continued need for conservation efforts. They say knowledge is power and there is no better way to empower and engage people than seeing the beauty of an animal up close. As lifelong animal advocates and professionals, we always hope that our passion and appreciation for our animals passes onto all those we talk to at these events.

I thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and ask that you oppose this agenda item #16-1357

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric M. Weld", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric M. Weld  
President  
Hollywood Animals, Inc.