



March 22, 2017
House Federal and State Committee

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today regarding dangerous regulated animals in Kansas. My name is Midge Grinstead and I am the senior state director for The Humane Society of the United States. I'm here today to ask the committee to support House Bill 2276.

Currently, 27 states have bans on primates with another 10 requiring permits. There are 28 states that have bans on wolves and eleven more states that have permitting and other requirements. Twelve Kansas counties and 41 cities ban private ownership of these species, but surrounding areas remain at risk without a statewide law.

HB 2276 bans the private ownership of wolves and primates in Kansas and has reasonable exemptions for zoos accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ZAA, wildlife sanctuaries, research facilities, and circuses. Individuals who currently possess these species can keep them until the animals pass on, but they will not be allowed to acquire additional dangerous exotic animals.

Animal health professionals agree that wolves and primates, such as apes and monkeys, should **NOT** be kept as pets. Regardless of training and handling, these animals will always be unpredictable and inherently dangerous wild animals. Apes, monkeys and other non-human primates not only attack their owners, but neighborhood children, often causing serious injury. They also can spread viral, bacterial, fungal and parasitic diseases to humans, such as the Herpes B virus, which can be fatal to humans.

Wild animals retain their basic instincts, even if they are captive born and hand raised. These animals can and have caused numerous deaths and many serious injuries. Individuals and unaccredited entities simply do not have the knowledge, experience, or resources to safely house and meet the specialized needs of animals such as non-human primates and wolves. As a result, communities and members of the public are put at unnecessary risk.

Emergency responders, such as the law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics, animal control officers and animal disaster response teams are put in danger when dealing with disasters, escapes and attacks. And taxpayers, as well as the sanctuary community, are footing the bill to deal with the problem.

In addition to the health and safety risks, there are also significant financial costs of capturing escaped animals, responding to attacks, and confiscating animals from inhumane and unsafe conditions. HB 2276 is commonsense legislation that proactively works to protect the citizens of Kansas

Thank you, Midge Grinstead, Senior State Director – The Humane Society of the United States

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