

Craig, Sonda

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To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: wild animals in traveling shows

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Dear City Council Members and Mayor Reynolds.

I would like to submit written comments on agenda item 24-0588 on the June 13 City of LaCrosse Council consent agenda. This passed unanimously at the J/A committee meeting June 4. This ordinance change is to amend Chapter 10, Article VIII of the Code of Ordinances of the City of LaCrosse in regards to the participation of certain wild animals in traveling shows (circuses). The covered animals in the ordinance amendment are elephants, big cats, non-human primates and bears.

Wild animals used in circuses and other traveling shows are subjected to violent training methods and extreme confinement with travel and are unable to express natural behaviors. These exhibits present a public health and safety risk, are detrimental to animal welfare and undermine conservation efforts. These exhibits are dwindling in popularity as more people are opting for other forms of family friendly, cruelty free entertainment. Animal free versions of Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circuses have successfully toured as they can dazzle audiences with clowns, acrobats, trapeze artists, bicycle stunts and more.

A total of ten states and nearly 200 other localities in 37 states have passed various restrictions governing the use of wild animals in circuses and traveling shows, most recently in May the Maryland governor signed a law banning big cats, bears, non-human primates and elephants in traveling shows. Circus World in Baraboo ended their elephant act in 2023.

I thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration to add the City of LaCrosse to the list of communities requiring a higher standard for animal welfare in the entertainment world.

Respectfully,
Margie Webster
Town of Shelby