

ANIMAL ISSUES LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

December 1, 2017



IN THE NEWS

Elephant owner killed at Thailand Zoo

Earlier this week, an 32-year-old male elephant named Ekasit crushed its owner to death shortly after the man unchained the animal. The elephant was being temporarily housed at the Chiang Mai Zoo, and it is reported that the elephant was in musth. Ekasit is considered a celebrity in Thailand, since he has appeared in numerous feature films and commercials. There are no reports yet on what will happen to the elephant in the wake of this incident. [Celebrity elephant kills owner in Thailand](#) (Malay Mail Online, Nov. 28).

Court date set for Nosey the elephant's custody decision

A December 15 hearing will be held before Lawrence County (Alabama) District Court Judge Angela Terry in the case regarding the seizure of Nosey the elephant by Lawrence County Animal Control. Nosey has been at The Elephant Sanctuary since November 9. [Nosey's future in hands of court](#) (Decatur Daily.com, Nov. 30).

Another circus tiger escapes, this time in China

A circus tiger at a village fair escaped and injured two children before being caught and returned to its enclosure. The children have since been released from the hospital (fortunately the injuries were minor). No further details are available, but the attached article contains video of the incident: [Chinese circus tiger attacks two children after breaking out of cage at circus performance](#) (South China Morning Post, Nov. 27).

More news coverage on the tiger shot in Paris last week

Despite initial news reports that police shot the tiger who escaped the Bormann-Moreno Circus on November 24, it was circus owner Eric Bormann who had to shoot the animal. Bormann also claims that the lock to the tiger's cage was cut in a "malicious act" to enable the tiger's escape; he is calling on Paris police to investigate the possibility of local animal activists cutting the lock. [Trainer of escaped tiger says cage lock was cut](#) (The Local France, Nov. 26). In the meantime, the [Brigitte Bardot Foundation](#) and other activist groups continue to capitalize on last week's incident: [France under pressure to ban circus animals after killing of tiger in Paris](#) (The Local France, Nov. 27).

PENDING LEGISLATION

A number of states have started pre-filing bills for 2018. I am monitoring for any new legislation of interest -- two bills are already on my radar, and I will add them to the tracking chart once the official texts are introduced in January:

NH HB 1385 (to be introduced January 3): to establish a committee to study animal welfare in New Hampshire.

VA SB 28 (to be introduced January 10): regarding medical research on dogs and cats. Would prohibit appropriating or expending state funds for or to any organization, whether public or private, to carry out any medically unnecessary scientific or medical research that causes significant pain or distress to a dog or cat.

Local Ordinances:

Bill	Summary	Latest Action
CA – Los Angeles	Would prohibit exhibition of wild and exotic animals for entertainment or amusement, including circuses and other wild or exotic animal shows (exempts zoos, films, research facilities and conservation-related programs).	4/25/17: City Council voted to have the City Attorney prepare an Ordinance to present to Council.

MD – Montgomery County	Would ban the use of animals in circuses or other businesses that “exhibit or financially benefit” from the exhibition of those animals. Includes the use of camels, bears, primates, wildcats, crocodiles, and snakes. (Montgomery County Fair is exempted.)	9/11/17: the measure was discussed at a Public Safety Committee work session. Agenda packet: Public Safety, Bill 23-17 . Committee decided not to vote on the bill at the meeting and to review the language further. Video from the Sept. 11 meeting . 11/9/17: additional work session meeting held; Committee recommended sending the bill to the full Council with revisions.
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State Bills:

Bill No.	Summary	Latest Action	Adjournment Date
CA ACR 106	Resolution would “recognize the humane treatment of companion animals through the eradication of neglect and cruelty and the fostering of kindness and empathy ... as core principles of the State of CA.”	7/10/17: referred to the Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media.	Adjourned until 1/3/18, bills carry over to 2018 session.
MA HB 418	Prohibits the use of elephants in traveling animal acts. Companion bill to MA SB 1898.	10/17/17: reported favorably by Environment and Natural Resources Committee and referred to House Ways & Means.	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
MA HB 2290	An Act changing the legal status of pets from personal property to companion animals.	7/18/17: hearing was held before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
MA HB 3561	An Act relative to the importation of animals for rescue, shelter, foster, adoption, or remote sale. Requires organizations to apply for import registrations through the Department of Agricultural Resources.	1/23/17: referred to Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture 9/12/17: hearing held	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session

Bill No.	Summary	Latest Action	Adjournment Date
MA SB 460	An Act to prevent animal suffering by irresponsible breeding practices.	1/23/17: referred to Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture 9/12/17: hearing held	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
MA SB 470	An Act banning the sale of dogs and cats in commercial pet shops	1/23/17: Ref. to Joint Cmte on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture 9/12/17: hearing held	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
MA SB 490	To protect wild and exotic animals from cruel and inhumane treatment, and to protect the public from dangers inherent to traveling exhibitions and acts featuring wild and exotic animals.	5/2/17: Hearing held before Joint Committee; no vote taken.	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
MA S 1898	Prohibits the use of elephants in traveling animal acts. Also MA HB 418.	10/17/17: attached to favorable report by Joint Committee of HB 418.	Adjourned 11/15/17, bills carry over to 2018 session
NJ A 430	Requires registration and reporting to prevent illegal trade of tigers.	1/27/16: Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. (Carried over from 2016.)	1/9/18
NJ A 437	Revises criteria for determining a vicious/potentially dangerous dog.	1/27/16: Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. (Carried over from 2016.)	1/9/18
NJ A 1876	Responsible Dog Ownership Act; leashing and fencing requirements.	1/27/16: Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. (Carried over from 2016.)	1/9/18

Bill No.	Summary	Latest Action	Adjournment Date
NJ A 2594	Prohibits the use of exotic, non-domestic, or wild animals in traveling performances and exhibitions.	2/8/16: Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee (carried over from 2016).	1/9/18
NJ A 4386	“Nosey’s Law” – prohibits the use of elephants in traveling animal acts. See also NJ S 2508.	12/12/16: Referred to Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.	1/9/18
NJ A 4722	Establishes certain requirements concerning animal rescue organizations, breeders, and importation/sale/adoption of dogs and cats.	3/20/17: Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee	1/9/18
NJ S 323	Requires liability insurance for permit to possess certain dangerous animals.	5/15/17: reported from Commerce Committee with amendments	1/9/18
NJ S 2508	“Nosey’s Law” – prohibits the use of elephants in traveling animal acts. See also NJ A 4396.	10/20/16: Passed Senate and referred to Assembly Ag Committee.	1/9/18
NY A 3517	Prohibits circuses from conducting performances in the state for two years when a circus has been found to be in violation/non-compliance with AWA.	1/27/17: Referred to Economic Development Committee	12/31/17
NY S 1283	Prohibits tethering, restraining, caging or penning of dogs or animals between 7:00PM-6:00AM; pen or cage must be 4x the height/length of dog/animal.	1/9/17: Referred to Agriculture Committee	12/31/17
NY S 5426	Would prohibit circuses from conducting shows or other performances in the state for two years where a circus has been found to be in violation/non-compliance with the Animal Welfare Act of 1966.	6/5/17: passed third reading and sent to Rules Committee. Committed to Rules on 6/21.	12/31/17

Bill No.	Summary	Latest Action	Adjournment Date
PA SB 248	Bans the for-profit display of any animal that traveled in a mobile housing facility in the 15 days preceding the display.	1/27/17: Referred to Judiciary Committee. 6/6/17: hearing held in Judiciary; no vote taken.	12/31/17
PA SB 816	Amends the 1982 Dog Law regarding dangerous dogs.	7/6/17: Referred to Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee	12/31/17

Federal Bills:

Bill No.	Summary	Latest Action
HR 1759	Traveling Exotic Animal And Public Safety Protection Act ; to amend the Animal Welfare Act to restrict the use of exotic and wild animals in traveling performances.	4/11/17: Referred to the House Agriculture Committee, Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture
HR 1818	Big Cat Public Safety Act ; makes it unlawful (with certain exceptions) to import, export, transport, sell, breed, or possess lions, tigers, and other exotic cats.	4/11/17: Referred to the House Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Lands
HR 3792	Animal Emergency Planning Act of 2017 ; amend the Animal Welfare Act to require that covered persons develop and implement emergency contingency plans.	9/14/17: Introduced and referred to the House Committee on Agriculture 10/5/17: Referred to the Subcmte. on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture

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