

KIM BASINGER

October 21, 2013

Dear Mayor Garcetti and Council Members,

On behalf of Last Chance for Animals and Voice for the Animals, that have worked tirelessly to educate the public about the abuse of elephants in traveling circuses, I am writing to urge you to support Councilmember Paul Koretz's proposal to ban the use of elephant guides (bullhooks) and elephants in traveling shows within the city of Los Angeles.

I have been personally involved with the PAWS Elephant Sanctuary since the early 1990's. I have seen first-hand the psychological damage these elephants have sustained from the abuse and the inability to exhibit their natural behaviors. Most of these magnificent and brilliant creatures do not ever fully recover from the agonizing and inhumane treatment that they have endured from the constant use of bullhooks tearing into the skin, brutal beatings, deprivation and other methods of control...not to leave out the endless hours of standing in cramped spaces and having to endure intense weather conditions from extreme heat and cold. This end result can be frighteningly dangerous under the big top when elephants and audiences are put in the same arena so close together.

These elephants recovering in sanctuaries, here in America and other parts of the world, are clear evidence that handlers in these circuses have no enforced humane standard in which they have to abide by. Therefore, these animals are truly vulnerable to constant mistreatment and control tactics, which are not monitored by anyone.

This is not a circumstance of penalizing all circuses, for there are many, many brilliant & highly successful entertainment organizations, circuses such as Cirque de Soleil, Circus Vargas and dozens of others who have a no animal policy and truly delight audiences all over the world. Past and recent footage gathered by undercover investigators have shown that names such as

Ringling Bros, Barnum & Bailey and Shrine Circus have all been found to abuse their elephants. Can you just imagine what goes on in circuses under the radar? I can.

I know of two devoted heads of a great organization who have dedicated and spent their lives fighting for the protection and freedom of elephants. They have personally followed circuses all over America and other parts of the world, camera in hand, documenting the extent of the behind the scene atrocities that go on daily in the lives of elephants. I have seen it with my own eyes.

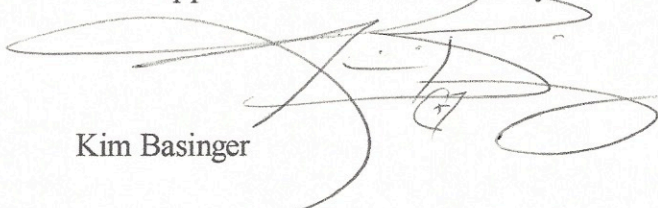
Opponents will say a ban will deprive children of a chance to see elephants up close. There are 271 elephants in accredited zoos across this country. Three of those elephants are at the LA County Zoo where a \$42 mil enclosure was recently completed. For now, this would be the place to bring your children to see elephants up close, as opposed to being forced into positions that are painful, humiliating and unnatural all in the name of entertainment for our enjoyment.

There might be a question of taking away a choice...**But we have no choice**...Abuse in any way is not ok. Using a bullhook on an elephant and using these massive creatures in any form of entertainment is abuse.

Los Angeles is a great city and cities across America are waiting to hear what Los Angeles will do. This is a tremendous opportunity for Los Angeles, it's image and the reputation it has for bringing great changes for the better to fruition.

Please do the right thing and support this proposal.

With Appreciation & Great Sincerity,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Basinger', with several loops and flourishes.

Kim Basinger

Cc: Chris DeRose [Last Chance For Animals]
Melya Kaplan [Voice For The Animals]