

# TIGER KING:

## Questions Answered

Big Cat Captivity Laws in the United States



# The Problem

**5,000** to **10,000** tigers living in captivity in the United States

Only **3,000** left in the wild



No federal laws designed to prohibit this

# The Problem

INADEQUATE FEDERAL LAWS  
PROTECTING CAPTIVE TIGERS

+

INCONSISTENT STATE REGULATION

+

INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT OF  
AWA/ESA

=

THOUSANDS OF BIG CATS LANGUISH  
AND SUFFER IN CAPTIVITY IN U.S.



# Federal Laws that Protect Big Cats

**Endangered Species Act:** Prohibits the interstate and foreign commerce of listed species and their parts and products without a permit or authorization from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Prohibits killing endangered species.

**Captive Wildlife Safety Act:** Makes it illegal to import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase, in interstate or foreign commerce, live large cats (USDA license holders exempt).

**Animal Welfare Act:** Sets minimum care standards that address housing, handling, food, water, basic living requirements for most warm-blooded animals, including big cats, used for commercial purposes.



# Patchwork of State Regulation

Types of state laws:

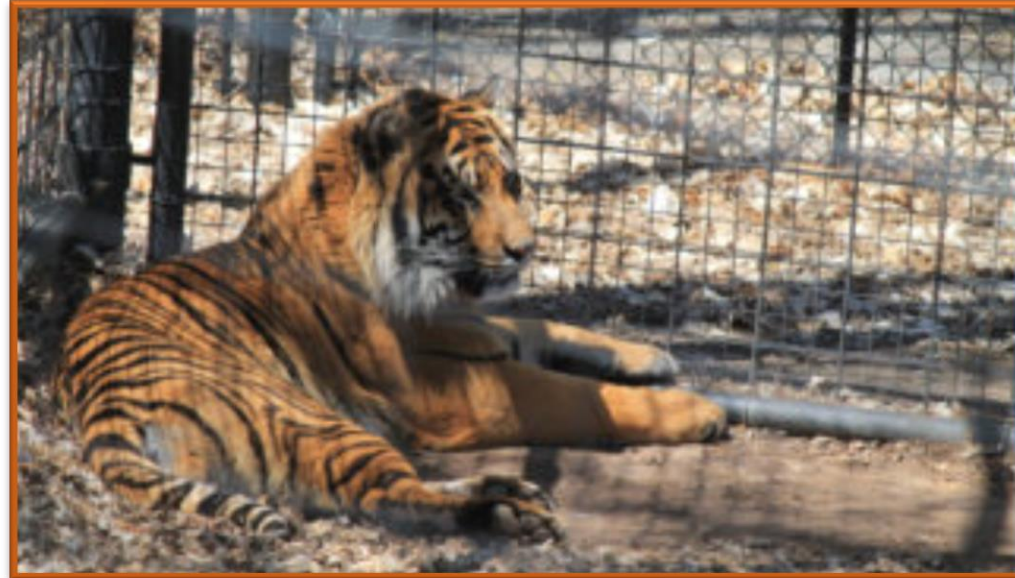
- Ban on private possession of big cats
- Ban on private possession of exotic big cats
- Allow private possession with a permit or license
- No law regulating or banning private possession

*4 states do not regulate private possession of exotic wild animals: Alabama, Nevada, North Dakota, and Wisconsin*



# Enforcement

- Fines don't deter repeat violators
- Exhibitor loophole
- Complaint-based enforcement and inspection
- Agencies are understaffed



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# Next Step: Big Cat Public Safety Act



## H.R. 1380

- Sponsors: Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) & Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)
- 227 co-sponsors

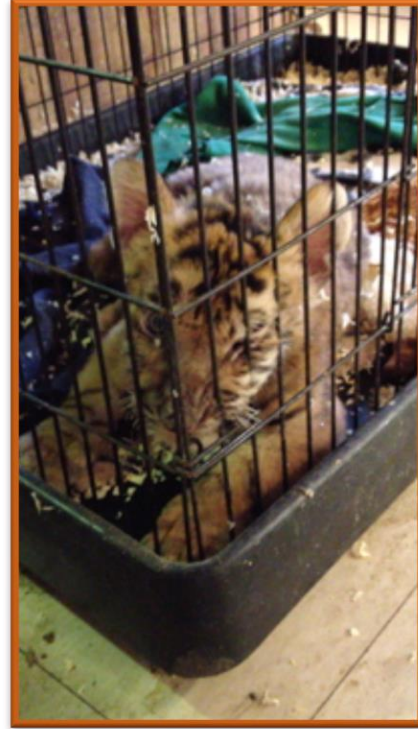
## S. 2561

- Sponsor: Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)
- 17 co-sponsors





# Next Step: Big Cat Public Safety Act



**“Cub petting fuels the rapid and vicious cycle of breeding and dumping cubs after they outgrow their usefulness.”  
– Brian Fitzpatrick, bill sponsor**

# Lawsuits to Help Captive Big Cats



# What You Can Do

## Be an active participant in the legislative process:

- Sign up for ALDF action alerts: [aldf.org/TakeAction](http://aldf.org/TakeAction)
- Get to know your elected officials
- Lend your voice to captive wild animals
- Boycott roadside zoos, cub-petting operations, and circuses that use animals
- Pass an ordinance



# Thank you!

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Stay up to date on ALDF's work:

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