

# Using Local Legislation to Protect Animals

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## Prohibiting Circuses and Traveling Shows that Exploit Animals

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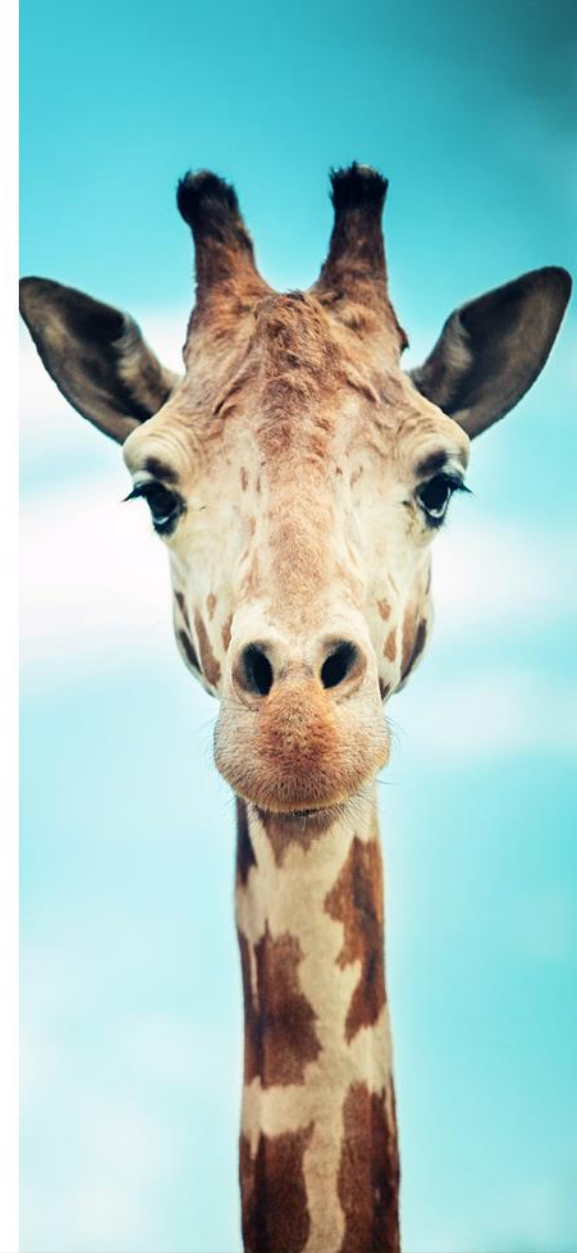


# Webinar Roadmap

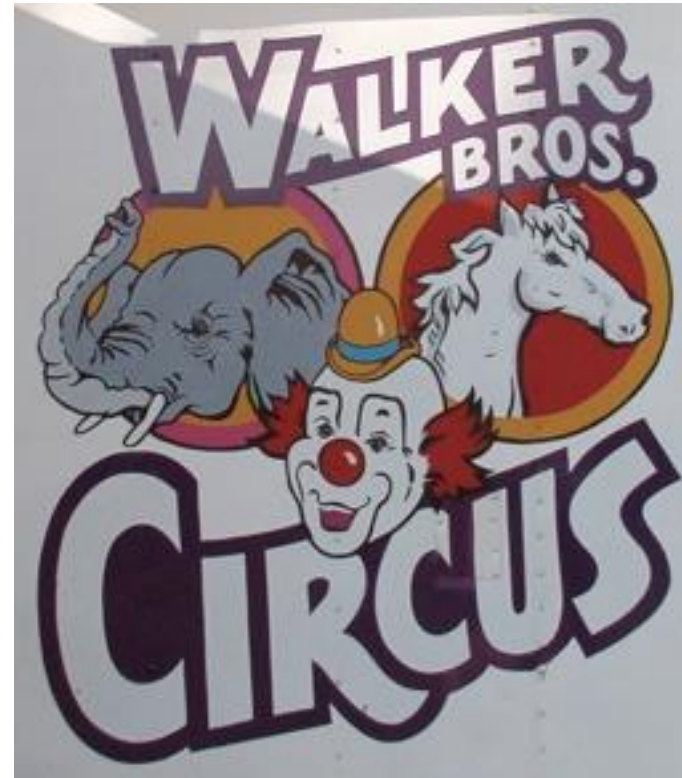
- Why local legislation?
- Cruelty and safety issues
- Existing laws
- Advocating for a ban in your city/county
- Working with legislators
- Grassroots advocacy



**POLL: Have you ever volunteered on a campaign to help animals in circuses?**



# Going Undercover for Animals



# Why Local Legislation?

- Protects animals and people in your community
- Sets an example for other communities
- Sets the stage for future state and federal legislation
- Incentivizes shift to humane, non-animal model



# Why Is It Wrong To Use Animals?

- Inherently cruel due to nature of the traveling show
- History of public safety risk
- Impossible to meet animals' complex needs on the road
- Not a question of good vs. bad actors



# Cruel Training

- Always present fear of punishment
- Bullhooks, whips, electric shocking devices
- Taken as babies
- Wild animals near public
- Trainers must maintain control



# Public Safety

- Wild animals are dangerous and unpredictable
- Collapsible, temporary, mobile enclosures
- In close proximity to the public
- Animals have escaped, injured and killed people



Pinterest

Tyke was shot 87 times after killing her trainer and injuring her groomer.

NEWS > WORLD

## Zebra escape from the circus and cause havoc in Philadelphia

VIEW COMMENTS



Freedom: The zebras escaped from the circus (file picture) / @Key\_BlackBeauty



# Existing Laws

- Exhibitors must be licensed under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA)
- Establishes minimal standards of care in terms of housing and sanitation
- Allows bullhooks, whips, and electrical shock
- No requirement for psychological well-being, except for primates
- When confronted with violations, the USDA tends to issue warnings, negligible fines, or take no action at all
- Exhibitors will rarely lose a license



**POLL: Do you live in a city or state with a circus ban?**



# State Laws

- New Jersey, 2018 (bans the use of wild animals in traveling acts)
- Hawaii, 2018 (bans the use of wild animals in traveling acts)
- California, 2019 (bans the use of all animals, except dogs, cats, and domesticated horses, in circuses only)
- Colorado, 2021 (bans the use of certain wild animals, including big cats, bears, nonhuman primates, and elephants, from being used in circuses and traveling shows)



# State Laws

- New York, 2017 (bans the use of elephants in traveling acts)
- Illinois, 2017 (bans the use of elephants in traveling acts)
- Rhode Island, 2016 (bans the use of bullhooks, which operates as a de facto ban on elephants because trainers rely so heavily on bullhooks for training)
- Kentucky, 2022 (bans the use of endangered species in circuses and exotic animals in county fairs, including elephant rides)



# County/City Law

- More than 150 cities and counties across 37 states have restricted or banned the use of wild animals in circuses and traveling shows
- Can your city be next?



# Passing Local Legislation

- Gain the support of legislators through citizen lobbying
- Using grassroots advocacy



# Citizen Lobbying

- Finding a sponsor
  - Which legislators are animal friendly?
  - What past legislation have they championed?
- Meeting with legislators
  - Requesting a meeting
- Keys to success and best practices
  - Dress for a business meeting
  - Remain calm and kind
  - Be prepared



# Legislative Process

- City Council, County Commission, Assembly, Board, Chamber
- Every jurisdiction is unique, but the general process is:
  - Introduction
  - Drafting into language to fit local code
  - Review by committee
  - Vote by full council



# Grassroots Advocacy

- Goal: demonstrate a need and desire for change in your community to lawmakers
- Grassroots advocacy involves getting members of your community engaged in the political process using tools like action alerts, social media, and testimony



# Action Alerts

- What is it? Asking someone to contact their legislators pertaining to a specific issue
- Keys:
  - Keep it short, specific, and easy
  - Provide a sample message
  - Send to everyone who lives in the appropriate jurisdiction



# Social Media

- Keep your community updated!
- Share your action alerts
- Be kind
- Address differences and opposition



# Testimony

- Prepare 2-3 minutes of testimony
- Be prepared to get cutoff or have less time
- Introduce yourself and thank the legislators for their time
- Be concise and use your strongest arguments
- Keep your cool
- Encourage other members of your community to testify



# Grasstops Advocacy

- Search your network
  - Local celebrity
  - Business owner
  - Election campaign donor
  - Friend of the mayor



**POLL: After participating in this webinar, how likely are you to work in your community on a local ordinance?**



# Thank you!

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We couldn't do this without you

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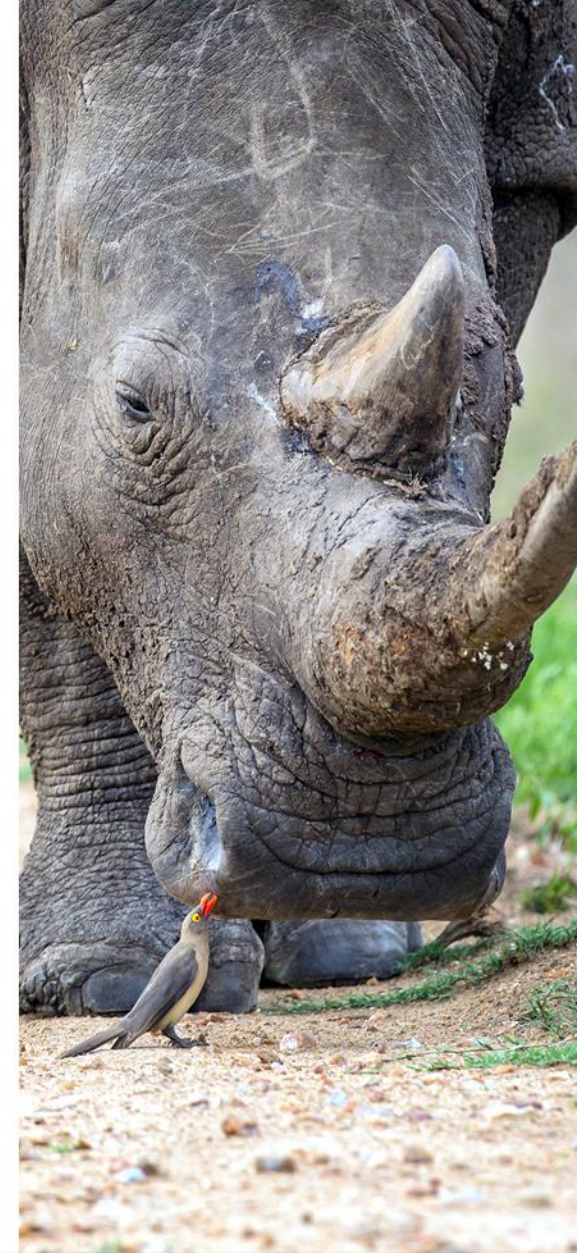
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