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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Congress: Bill to end use of wild animals in circuses unveiled

Congressman Rep. Jim Moran, Bob Barker, and Jorja Fox announce new Bill to end animal suffering

Washington, D.C. – Measures that could see an end to elephants, lions, tigers, monkeys and bears touring with circuses have been unveiled today at a press conference attended by Bob Barker, Jorja Fox, the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), and Animal Defenders International (ADI). The **Traveling Exotic Animal Protection Act (TEAPA)**, introduced by Rep. Jim Moran (D-Va.), will restrict the use of exotic and non-domesticated animals in traveling circuses and exhibitions.

Announcing the Bill at a launch in the Rayburn Building, Rep. Jim Moran (D-Va.) stated:

“Based upon the publically-available research, and video and photographic evidence, it is clear that traveling circuses cannot provide the proper living conditions for these exotic animals. That is why this legislation is intended to target just the most egregious circumstances involving exotic and wild animals in traveling circuses. It is not intended to affect zoos, aquariums, horse racing, rodeos, or permanent facilities where animals travel out for film, television or advertising work.

“Keeping elephants in chains, confining wild animals like lions and tigers in small cages, and forcing them to perform unnatural tricks for the sole purpose of human amusement, is increasingly difficult to justify the more we learn about these intelligent, social creatures.”

This is the first bill to comprehensively tackle the use of all wild animals in circuses ever to be launched in the U.S. The Bill will end the keeping of animals for extended periods in temporary

facilities, the cruel training and control methods employed by circuses and address public safety issues. It will not impact zoos or other static facilities with captive wildlife.

Philanthropist and TV host of "The Price Is Right", Bob Barker, said: "There will be a time when people will be shocked that we ever allowed the suffering of these animals in the name of entertainment to continue so long. Elephants living in chains and being beaten; lions and tigers in small cages on trucks, being whipped to perform tricks; it's the dark ages. This Bill helps bring us out of the dark ages."

Known to 73 million CSI viewers as Sara Sidle, today Jorja Fox said: "It is time to say that elephants should not be kept in chains, nor lions, tigers, bears and monkeys in small cages on the backs of trucks. This Bill has the potential to eradicate considerable animal suffering and I believe it will be embraced by Americans."

Jan Creamer, of Animal Defenders International, an organization that has secured similar legislation in several countries, stated: "We hope this historic day marks the beginning of the end for the cruel and outdated practice of using wild animals in circuses. In circumstances of constantly traveling and housing animals in temporary, collapsible accommodation, it is not possible to adequately care for wild animals in circuses. It will also end the physical abuse we have exposed during our investigations, which is a result of the close control required of these animals, and teaching them unnatural tricks. This is a good day for animals and America."

Ed Stewart, cofounder and director of the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), whose sanctuaries have been at the forefront of the rescue and rehabilitation of circus animals said: "We have witnessed the conditions in which circus animals live in and the physical and psychological damage they endure. Mr Barker has personally funded the peaceful retirement of numerous ex-circus animals to sanctuaries. It is time that we as a civilized nation, stop the frivolous use of exotic animals in demeaning circuses. The show must not go on!"

ADI Veterinarian Mel Richardson, who has over 40 years experience with captive wildlife, noted: "From a veterinary standpoint this is clear cut – travelling circuses are no place for wild animals. These animals are suffering and it must be stopped."

A new video screened at the launch entitled "*In the United States today...*" featured footage from circuses including violence, confinement and deprivation. A series of congressional briefings, which cover key issues such as "Public Health & Safety", "Enforcement", "Captivity & Transport", "Control and Violence", "TB" and "Economics" were also launched today.

ADI and PAWS say there is overwhelming evidence to support the proposed legislation and that there is a growing acceptance around the world that circuses are no place for wild animals. Similar measures have already been passed in Austria, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Peru, Portugal, and legislation to end the use of wild animals in circuses is currently under consideration in the UK, Brazil, Chile and Colombia. Several U.S. towns and cities have passed ordinances prohibiting wild animal acts.

At today's press conference it was stressed that this is a federal issue because circuses move from state to state and it is regulated by the USDA. It was noted that because of the transitory nature of traveling circuses, any regulatory system places an enormous burden on the taxpayer and is doomed to failure.

After Bolivia passed a ban on animal circuses, ADI was called in by the authorities for an enforcement operation which concluded earlier this year. Eight circuses defying the ban were closed down and all of the animals rescued. Many animals were rehomed in Bolivia, however because of limited facilities in the country, ADI also relocated 25 lions to The Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado, 4 lions to the PAWS ARK 2000 Sanctuary in California and a baboon to a UK Sanctuary. The dramatic mission was funded by Bob Barker.

In the coming months, members of Congress will be urged to sign the Bill. Jorja Fox concluded: "Everyone now has a chance to end this suffering, people should contact their member of Congress today urging them to sign the Bill. It's a practical and reasonable measure to protect animals. Don't take no for an answer."

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Note to Editors: Video footage, visuals are available upon request.

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Performing Animal Welfare Society

PAWS operate three captive wildlife sanctuaries in California, providing lifetime care for hundreds of exotic animals. Having worked inside the performing animal industry and now specializing in the care of abused, abandoned or retired performing animals, the PAWS founders are acknowledged experts on the impacts on these animals and the suffering they endure in the name of entertainment. They provide expert testimony in criminal and agency investigations and also provide expertise to wildlife agencies, Congress, State Legislatures, and city and county hearings across the United States.

www.pawsweb.org

Animal Defenders International

With offices in Los Angeles, London and Bogota, ADI campaigns across the globe on animals in entertainment, providing technical advice to governments, securing progressive animal protection legislation, drafting regulations and rescuing animals in distress. ADI has a worldwide reputation for providing video and photographic evidence exposing the behind-the-scenes suffering in industry and supporting this evidence with scientific research on captive wildlife and transport. ADI rescues animals all over the world, educates the public on animals and environmental issues.

<http://www.adiusa.org>

www.ad-international.org/animals_in_entertainment

- We estimate (conservatively) there are currently around 300 exotic/wild animals with US circuses.
- There are currently around 18 non-animal circuses (human-only performances).
- **City/county ordinances that restrict animals from traveling circuses:**
CA: Corona, Encinitas, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Marin County, Pasadena, Rohnert Park, Santa Ana; CO, Boulder; CT, Stamford; FL, Hollywood; Pompano Beach; Tallahassee, Clearwater; IL, Collinsville; GA, Fulton; MA, Braintree, Quincy, Revere, Somerville, Weymouth; MO, Richmond; NC, Orange County, Chapel Hill; NY, Greenburgh, Southampton; SC, Chester; TX, Simonton; VT, Burlington; WA, Port Townsend, Redmond; WI, Green Bay.