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**Bob Barker, Jorja Fox and animal protection organizations
launch Traveling Exotic Animal Protection Act.**

Historic Bill to end cruelty to wild animals in circuses

Washington, D.C. – Today on Capitol Hill, renowned celebrity animal protectionists Bob Barker and Jorja Fox will join Animal Defenders International (ADI), the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and members of Congress to launch a Bill that will change the way in which animals are used in the name of entertainment in the USA.

The Traveling Exotic Animal Protection Act (TEAPA) is a historic first for the U.S., and this Bill, which has attracted bipartisan support and been sponsored by Congressman Jim Moran (D-Va), aims to restrict the use of exotic and wild animals in traveling circuses, effectively bringing to an end the random cruelty and neglect associated with circuses of this nature. It is the first bill to comprehensively tackle the use of all wild animals in U.S. circuses ever to be launched in the United States.

Philanthropist, and TV host of "The Price Is Right", Bob Barker, said, "Americans are becoming increasingly aware that circus animals suffer from violent training techniques and severe confinement. Big, wild animals should not be part of the traveling circus and simply put, animal acts in circuses are antiquated and belong in the past, in a time when humans were ignorant about the needs of the other species who share our planet."

CSI actress Jorja Fox, known to 73 million viewers as CSI's Sara Sidle, adds, "Congress has a responsibility to protect the welfare of animals and ensure public safety. A prohibition on the use of exotic and wild animals in traveling circuses is proportionate, responsible, the least expensive solution to this problem, and long overdue. We call on Congress to bring to an end, once and for all, the abuse and suffering that has been exposed by ADI time and time again."

Congressman Moran said: "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.”

A new video to be screened at the launch entitled, "*In the United States today*," features footage from circuses, including violence, confinement and deprivation. The Bill is supported by a series of Congressional Briefings, which cover key issues such as "Public Health & Safety", "Enforcement", "Captivity & Transport", "Control and Violence", "TB" and "Economics." This provides overwhelming evidence to support the reasons that it is time for the U.S. to move forward with other countries that are now taking action – the U.S. needs to restrict the use of wild animals in traveling circuses.

Careful research and detailed undercover investigations in U.S. traveling circuses have shown the welfare of animals is unacceptably compromised as the animals endure confinement, physical and social deprivation, long, arduous journeys, brutal control methods and physical violence. The training tools of the circus trade include bullhooks, electric prods, and whips.

Large animals like lions and tigers spend their lives cramped in small cages, and elephants are forced to live chained by one or more legs for hours on end. In addition, traveling circuses pose a serious threat to public safety, as the keeping of wild, stressed animals in dangerously close proximity to the public is a recipe for disaster. Incidents of circus workers and members of the public having been killed and maimed by circus animals are well documented.

The evidence shows how law enforcement authorities have difficulty enforcing Federal animal health, safety, and welfare laws, and violations due to the mobile and transitory nature of traveling circuses.

“This is a historic day," said ADI President, Jan Creamer. "This is about America standing up and saying these magnificent animals should not be abused in the name of entertainment. The days of animals suffering in traveling circuses are numbered, not just here in the U.S. but all over the world. Due to severe confinement, lack of free exercise, and the restriction of natural behaviors, animals used in traveling circuses suffer and are prone to health, behavioral, and psychological problems."

Creamer continues, "With the support of Bob Barker, ADI has exposed, time and again, that the use of violence to control animals is part of circus culture. In the U.S. we have seen animals beaten, whipped and electric shocked to make them perform tricks. We have shown that welfare and public safety are unacceptably compromised in traveling circuses. This brutality now needs to stop – for good.”

“Bob Barker and PAWS have advocated for performing animals for many years," said Ed Stewart, PAWS co-founder and director. "We have witnessed the conditions in which the animals live, and the physical and psychological damage they have endured. 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 performances. The Show Must Not Go On!"

Dr. Mel Richardson, ADI Veterinarian, who will be providing a veterinary perspective at today's launch, said, "As a veterinarian with more than 40 years of experience caring for captive wild animals, I can say unequivocally that these animals suffer."

In February of this year, ADI completed a mission that removed every circus animal from Bolivia after securing an animal circus ban there. This included flying 25 lions to Colorado and four to California to safe homes. Bolivia has the most progressive law in the world, but turned to American compassion to help the animals. ADI and PAWS believe this Bill will have massive popular support in the U.S.

Similar measures to prohibit or limit the use of animals in circuses have already been adopted in Bolivia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Peru, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, India and other countries and similar laws are being discussed in the UK, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Greece.

These countries have looked at the evidence and listened to the will of the people and done the right thing for animal welfare by implementing bans. It is now time that the U.S. did the same.

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Performing Animal Welfare Society: www.pawsweb.org

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, PAWS founders, Pat Derby and Ed Stewart, are acknowledged experts on the impact travelling life has on these animals and the suffering they endure in the name of entertainment. Pat and Ed 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.

Animal Defenders International: www.adiusa.org

With offices in Los Angeles, London and Bogota, ADI campaigns across the globe on the issue of 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 within the industry, and supports this evidence with scientific research on captive wildlife and transport.