



April 21, 2017

**PAWS Statement on Los Angeles City Council
Motion Regarding Asian Elephant Billy**

On April 19, 2017, Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz introduced a motion to relocate Asian elephant Billy from the Los Angeles Zoo to a sanctuary. If the City Council decides that Billy should be moved to a sanctuary and reaches out to PAWS, we are open to discussing options with city and zoo representatives. More than 10 years ago PAWS co-founder, the late Pat Derby, offered to accept Billy at our sanctuary. That offer still stands today. PAWS is the only GFAS-accredited sanctuary in the U.S. with the facilities and expertise required to care for bull elephants. Due to their size and strength, captive bull elephants often live in extreme confinement all over the world.

To accept Billy, PAWS would need to complete construction of interior elements of an existing barn and build the first phase (15 acres) of a new habitat at an estimated cost of \$5-6 million. This amount represents the cost of barn completion, habitat construction, enclosure fencing, access roads, utilities, and other infrastructure costs. (By comparison, zoo exhibits with far less space cost tens of millions of dollars.) This cost does not include the ongoing \$75,000+ per year required to care for Billy for the rest of his life.

The decision to relocate an elephant should always be made with great care and consideration, with the wellbeing of the elephant as its central and primary focus. We will be closely monitoring the progress of Councilmember Koretz's motion.