

Some things to consider before voting on The Captive Primate Safety Act (CPSA)

- If passed, the CPSA would prohibit the transportation of nonhuman primates, specifically “pet monkeys” across state lines. Private owners often travel with their monkeys to organizational meetings, simian conventions, educational gatherings and other events to learn hands-on approaches to responsible monkey care. The monkeys receive valuable enrichment and training through the interaction they receive from other monkeys and the people they routinely interact with at these events. This bill would prohibit these educational and enrichment activities.
- The CPSA would also prohibit transporting nonhuman primates across state lines for veterinarian care, preventing owners from the freedom to obtain quality healthcare for their monkeys from an experienced veterinarian of their choice. Not all states have veterinarians that will treat nonhuman primates and owners must seek medical care in other states.
- The CPSA would create a hardship for families around the country who are monkey owners because they could not leave their monkey behind while taking vacations or visiting their families and friends in other states. Monkeys provide nurturing and a feeling of well-being for the owners and their extended families who develop an intense bond with them.
- The CPSA would create a hardship for people whose monkey serves as a service animal, as they would not be allowed to travel out of state.
- The CPSA would create a hardship for private owners by limiting where a person could live or seek employment. They could not relocate to another state and take their monkey in the event of a life change.
- The CPSA would affect the life-plan of responsible nonhuman primate owners who have made arrangements for their monkey to go to a friend or relative in another state if they should become ill and can no longer care for their monkey, or, in the case of their death.

- People have owned and cared for “pet monkeys” in the U.S. for hundreds of years with no known health epidemics. Public health concerns are undocumented in the “pet monkey” population. (See attached email from the CDC) The transfer of diseases between nonhuman primates and humans is not being seen in the US pet population. Richard L. Heberling, PhD, who recently retired from the VRL writes, “Although I do not support monkeys as pets, I realize that many people feel very strongly about their pet monkeys. With appropriate personal hygiene and testing for TB and (Simian) B virus in order to determine the potential threat of these diseases, there should not be an infectious disease problem.” (see attached letter) Since 1975, the Federal Quarantine Regulations (42CFR71.53) have restricted the importation of nonhuman primates. Importers must register with the CDC, implement disease control measures, and may distribute nonhuman primates for only bona fide scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes as defined by the regulations. The importation of nonhuman primates for use as pets is not permitted under any circumstances. These restrictions also apply to the re-importation of nonhuman primates originating in the United States.
- Nonhuman primates are highly intelligent and social beings and the quality of care and nurturing provided by private owners who understand their complex needs has risen to exceptional standards with enrichment far surpassing that offered in some zoos. Responsible private owners surpass the Animal Welfare Act requirements and thereby also Federal USDA requirements which are based on the Animal Welfare Act. Requirements are already in place at the federal level for problems that arise concerning the care of nonhuman primates. Private owners assist each other in the education of responsible nonhuman primate care and encourage each other to strive to provide a high standard of care.
- The number of documented nonhuman primate bites, about 100 over a 10 year period speaks for the minimal threat of harm from a non-human primate as opposed to the annual 300,000 plus bites inflicted by man’s best friend – the DOG. Yet, there are no federal bills being introduced to stop the interstate travel of dogs.
- Nonhuman primates are not predators and in most instances will climb up a tree or onto a roof if an escape occurs. If left alone, the owner can retrieve the monkey without incident. Escapes are not prevalent and in most cases can be prevented through education about better handling methods.
- People who are law abiding and provide the most committed, responsible and appropriate care for their monkeys will be punished by the CPSA, while those who are unscrupulous will continue their trade anyway as has always been the case when something is forbidden. Passing this bill will only increase the problems and inherent dangers. When something is deemed illegal the criminal elements capitalize on it. Look at prohibition and the current drug trade. When something is forbidden it actually increases the illicit market, drives up prices, making it more profitable for the illegal profiteers, thereby increasing the incentive for illegal trade and defeating the very purpose for which the bill is intended.

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