



March 24, 2021

Senator Kerschen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding SB 269 - Dangerous Regulated Animals Act in Kansas. My name is Midge Grinstead and I am the Kansas state director for the Humane Society of the United States. I am here today on behalf of Kansas advocates in support of Senate Bill 269.

Currently, 27 states have bans on primates with another 10 requiring permits. There are 28 states that have bans on wolves and 11 more states that have permitting and other requirements. Twelve Kansas counties and 41 cities currently ban private ownership of these species, but animals do not understand county lines.

SB 269 bans the private ownership of wolves and non-human primates in Kansas and has reasonable exemptions for zoos accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ZAA, wildlife sanctuaries, research facilities, USDA licensed facilities and circuses. Individuals who currently possess these species can keep them until the animals pass on, but they will not be allowed to acquire additional dangerous exotic animals.

Animal health professionals agree that wolves and non-human primates, such as apes and monkeys, should **NOT** be kept as pets. Regardless of training and handling, these animals will always be unpredictable and inherently dangerous wild animals. Apes, monkeys and other non-human primates can spread viral, bacterial, fungal and parasitic diseases to humans, such as the Herpes B virus, which can be fatal to humans.

Wild animals retain their basic instincts, even if they are captive born and hand raised. These animals can and have caused numerous deaths and many serious injuries. Individuals and unaccredited entities simply do not have the knowledge, experience, or resources to safely house and meet the specialized needs of animals such as non-human primates and wolves. As a result, communities and members of the public are put at unnecessary risk.

Emergency responders, such as the law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics, animal control officers and animal disaster response teams are put in danger when dealing with wild animals. First responders in Kansas receive little or no training in regard to animal cruelty, animal handling or exotic animals and rarely have appropriate PPE to protect themselves.

In addition to the health and safety risks, there are also significant financial costs of capturing escaped animals, responding to attacks, and confiscating animals from inhumane and unsafe conditions. SB 269 is commonsense legislation that proactively works to protect the citizens of Kansas

Thank you, Midge Grinstead, State Director – Humane Society of the United States

785-766-3871 – mgrinstead@humanesociety.org