

Chair and Members  
Community and Protective Services Committee  
London City Hall  
300 Dufferin Street  
London, Ontario, N6B 1Z2

We are aware that the City of London's Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) may be hearing delegations supporting an exemption to the city's Animal Control By-Law regarding exotic animals in private zoos and their use throughout the municipality.

We strongly encourage the Committee not to support any request for an exemption to this By-law. This issue has already been extensively deliberated and addressed in a number of previous Council meetings.

The mission of the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society is to ensure all animals are free from abuse and neglect. The Ontario SPCA has experience in municipal and provincial laws and regulations and believes the regulation of exotic animals is vital to animal well-being and community safety.

The keeping of exotic animals poses many serious threats to public safety, such as transmission of disease, risk of escape and injury to handlers or the public who interact with them. Exotic animals require specialized housing facilities, veterinary care, diet and knowledgeable and experienced handlers or care providers. Even with many safeguards in place, and where an exotic animal has no previous history of aggressive or erratic behaviour, there are countless examples of situations where these wild animals have escaped and/or caused injury to handlers and the public.

The City of London Animal Control By-Law is an effective means of controlling the well-documented risks posed by keeping exotic animals, including crocodylians and venomous snakes, to the health, safety and well-being of residents, the animals and the environment.

The limited economic benefit of exotic animal businesses and organizations has been well documented and should not outweigh the risk to public safety and animal well-being.

I strongly urge to you to uphold the existing By-Law and not allow an exemption in this case.

Sincerely,

Doug Brooks  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Ontario SPCA and Humane Society