

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, December 9, 2022 1:08 AM
To: Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter Reptilia - Exemption to Animal Control By-law

Please add my letter to the public Council Agenda re: Exemption to the Animal Control By-law - Reptilia

Dear Members of Council,

Please do not support the motion passed by the Committee of Community and Protective Services asking staff to return with 'options' for an exemption to the Animal Control By-law for Reptilia.

Staff have explored exemptions to the Animal Control By-law for Reptilia more than once and as recent as April of this year. Asking staff to do it all over again simply because of a 'personal' change on Council is wasting staff time. New council members have the opportunity to review these reports just for the asking, and a long list of experts in animal welfare took the time to present at committee detailing why captive reptiles in artificial displays is cruel.

Exploitation of animals as a business model is cruel and old.

That's the bottom line and those councillors that advocated for Reptilia didn't show a sliver of compassion for the animals held in captivity. If these were dogs and cats, they would be outraged but their lack of understanding for reptiles makes them indifferent to their well being.

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They want the exemption because they know that simply displaying native and endangered reptiles from Ontario (with few exceptions - amphibians and reptiles in Ontario are listed at risk) is not enough. They need the exemption to display exotic reptiles such as crocodiles and venomous snakes to attract that crowd that perceives them as dangerous. This plays into the negative stereo types that can be harmful to wildlife.

It was suggested at committee that Reptilia in London would present a 'new' London and 'this is the change people voted for.' I found these comments particularly demeaning because they portrayed Londoners superficially. I agree that people voted for change but the change was for a Council that was receptive to residents including homeless residents, environmentally progressive and ethical.

[REDACTED]

Please accept Reptilia's report with no further action. Reptilia can commence its business without the exemption at any time.

Thank You

AnnaMaria Valastro