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February 12, 2023

Mayor and Members of Council
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON N6B 1Z2

Dear Mayor and Members of Council:

RE: Proposed animal control and business licensing by-law amendments / exotic animals

I am writing to urge you NOT to support amendments to 1) the Animal Control By-Law that would provide an exemption to the Reptilia zoo business to keep animals currently prohibited in the City of London and, 2) the Business Licensing By-Law that would create an exotic animal establishment license and operational standards for the keeping of exotic animals in London.

Providing an amendment to a single commercial business simply so they can keep prohibited animals they believe might help their business is contrary to the intent of the Animal Control By-law to protect human safety, prevent nuisance issues and to ensure humane treatment of animals.

The creation of a business license for exotic animal establishments and a regulatory program with a set of operational standards in the Business Licensing By-Law should also be rejected. The regulatory scheme, that City staff are unlikely to have the resources or expertise to deliver, is being proposed to control or mitigate future issues associated with the keeping of new exotic animals in the City, including exceptionally dangerous and inappropriate species. Those issues can be dealt with effectively, immediately and at no cost to the City by simply not making the proposed amendments and keeping problematic animals out.

Should the amendments be pursued, I believe they will waste City staff time, energy and taxpayer funds, and may result in enhanced risks to human health and safety, animal welfare problems, elevated risks to local environments and wildlife, nuisance issues and they will



provide a potential pathway for additional mobile zoos, roadside zoos and exotic animal keepers in the province to access or locate in the City.

Prior Council decisions were very clear that the City of London should be a modern, progressive, humane city for both animals and people and that old-fashioned, entertainment-based animal displays and roadshows no longer fit in with that vision. I hope you follow that direction.

For your information I am also attaching a few communications from organizations and experts who have previously provided input regarding Reptilia to London, St. Catharines and Toronto. Much of the content is relevant to London, so you may find some of it helpful.

Thank you considering this correspondence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Laidlaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Rob Laidlaw
CBiol MRSB, Executive Director
Zoocheck Inc.