

DISSENTING VIEWS

According to various sources, there are approximately 15,000 primate pets in the United States. All pet primates have been born in the United States and sold by USDA licensed breeders for the past 33 years and they cost between \$3,000 to \$30,000 each. The Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition has stated that 132 people have been injured by primates in the past ten years with nearly 40 percent of those injuries occurring in laboratories, research facilities, sanctuaries and zoos. These facilities are all exempt under the Captive Primate Safety Act. In contrast, there is evidence indicating that large dogs send nearly 300,000 people to hospital emergency rooms each year.

It has been argued that primates infect their human hosts with a variety of deadly diseases. In fact, there is little documented evidence that primate pets are infecting their human owners or even have the same diseases that are found in wild primate populations. During testimony on this legislation, Dr. Sian Evans, the Director of the DuMond Conservancy for Primates and Tropical Forests testified that: "Pet primates are not a documented source of disease for humans. There is no documentation or scientific evidence to support these claims."

In summary, there are more than 40 states that either prohibit or require a license or permit to own a non-human primate, a significant number of injuries caused by primates have happened at exempted facilities such as laboratories, sanctuaries and zoos, there is no documented evidence that primate pets are infecting their owners and there is a real question of whether the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be responsible for regulating the pet industry, particularly at a cost of \$5 million.

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