



July 7, 2017

Honorable Louie Gohmert
Vice-Chairman
Natural Resources Committee
US House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Strong Support for HR 2603: The SAVES Act

Dear Congressman Gohmert,

My name is Matt Oldenburg and my family has owned and operated the Zoo of Acadiana (dba Zoosiana) in Broussard, Louisiana for the past 15 years. We strongly support HR 2603, known as the SAVES Act. This bill is long overdue and it will eliminate duplicative, onerous regulation by removing nonnative species from the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Keeping nonnative species in the ESA is counterproductive to conservation and significantly impedes commerce by prohibiting interstate movement of these animals.

Zoosiana is an accredited zoological park and is the only one privately owned and managed in Louisiana. We receive no taxpayer funding – at neither the local, state, nor federal levels. We host 150,000 guests annually who come to our park to learn about and appreciate the many animals living here. 30,000 of these guests attend through school field trips!

Our zoo provides daily care and maintenance for more than 1,000 animals, representing 125+ species, many of which are endangered. We are fortunate to take this a step further and have a long history of successfully reproducing many of these endangered species. However, our access to genetic diversity for these animals is severely hampered by their listing in the ESA. Managed breeding programs are truly stifled by ESA listings as interstate movement is largely prohibited and the licenses to allow this, called CBW permits, are becoming difficult to renew.

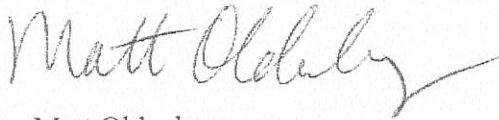
One of the reasons our guests continue to visit Zoosiana is to see rare and endangered animals. If we are unable to maintain and continue to successfully reproduce these species, our annual admissions will certainly be negatively impacted. Zoosiana employs a staff of 35 people and is

heavily invested in the local communities. Our guests enjoy viewing and learning about our rare and endangered animals and we owe this to the first class animal care provided by our staff.

Nonnative species should not be listed on the ESA. We strongly support HR 2603 to remove this duplicative and onerous regulation and to enhance conservation efforts in managed populations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information or have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Matt Oldenburg". The signature is written in dark ink and has a fluid, connected style.

Matt Oldenburg
Zoo of Acadiana (dba Zoosiana)
matt@zoosiana.com

Cc: Senator Bill Cassidy
Senator John Kennedy
Congressman Clay Higgins, Attn: Mrs. Kathee Facchiano