

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Zoo Campers call on Congress: Pass the Big Cat Public Safety Act**

SEATTLE – Youngsters attending Woodland Park Zoo Summer Camp are calling on U.S. Representatives in Congress to pass H.R. 263, the Big Cat Public Safety Act. Currently in the United States, five states lack any laws restricting ownership of big cats such as tigers and lions. The Big Cat Public Safety Act would create federal guidelines for the ownership and display of big cats and bolster efforts to prevent trafficking these highly dangerous and extremely endangered animals. The final camp of the season is Friday, August 27.



“Starting at a very young age, children have an innate curiosity about and affinity toward animals. Zoos offer an extraordinary opportunity for them to have up-close experiences with animals and to foster empathy,” said Woodland Park Zoo Wildlife Conservation Manager Bobbi Miller. “Teaching youth about the importance of actively advocating for the preservation of wildlife and halting wildlife trafficking is a critical step toward nurturing these future stewards of our planet.”

“There is no point to owning a big cat other than ‘because it’s cool,’” said Maya, age 12. “I know this law protects big cats.”

“Someday, I want to talk to animals and help to save them,” said Ella, age 9.

Maya and Ella joined their fellow campers in writing letters and drawing pictures of the cats they like the most. The letters are sent by Woodland Park Zoo to members of Congress, urging them to pass this important legislation.

As part of their camp experience, the kids searched marketplaces on social media to see if they could find sellers hawking trafficked items. They found results for items made from body parts of endangered animals within minutes.

“I want to save tigers because I like them and they are endangered,” said Elias, age 9. “They could all die if you don’t make this law.”

“If [big cats] keep getting killed at this rate they will go extinct,” chimed in Lucy, age 11.

The children, together with all their fellow campers, helped send approximately 100 letters to elected officials in Washington, D.C. You can join these young conservationists in calling for the quick passage of the Big Cat Public Safety Act by contacting your local U.S. Representative here:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>.

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