



IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Video and Documentation Available

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SF Supervisors to take Action on Elephant Deaths at SF Zoo Elephant Expert to Testify at Tuesday Meeting

San Francisco . . . Two elephant deaths in less than two months at the San Francisco Zoo have prompted Supervisor Fiona Ma to introduce a resolution today to relocate the two surviving elephants to sanctuaries. Elephant expert and sanctuary founder Pat Derby will testify at today's Board meeting.

With more than 30-years experience working with captive elephants, Ms. Derby is one of the leading authorities in the country on elephant health and care. Representatives of In Defense of Animals will testify as well.

What: SF Board of Supervisors Meeting
Where: SF City Hall, Supervisors Chambers
When: Tuesday, April 27, 2 p.m.

The elephants at the San Francisco Zoo have for years been suffering from degenerative health conditions caused by the environment at the Zoo. Despite this fact, the San Francisco Zoological Society, which is paid by the City to operate the publicly-owned Zoo, has refused to relocate the elephants to sanctuaries that offer adequate space (100+ acres) and conditions necessary for good health in elephants.

In Defense of Animals and other animal protection groups have for years warned against keeping elephants in the Zoo's substandard environment, a concern that was echoed by a 1999/2000 city performance audit, which characterized conditions for elephants at the Zoo as "especially poor."

Despite the deaths of 2 out of 4 elephants, the Zoo continues to drag its feet in transferring the elephants to a sanctuary. In the wild, elephants travel tens of miles a day and live 60-70 years. At the SF Zoo, elephants are held in lots of less than 1 acre. The Zoo has a history of elephants dying prematurely: in 1999 Penny died at the age of 41; on March 7, 2004 Calle died at 37; on April 22 Maybelle died at 43.

Resources available:

Videotape of sanctuaries, elephants in inadequate SF Zoo space (taken 1990-2004)
SF Performance Audit of SF Zoo
Elephant Medical Records
Industry Documentation on Requirements for Elephant Health.

For additional information on Supervisor Fiona Ma's proposal, please contact Jaynry Mak at 415/554-7463.

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