

1 **Texas State Legislation**

2 **Committee Hearing and Testimony, April 18, 2017**

3 **Before Texas State Representatives, Frullo, Gervin-Hawkins, Bonnen, Faircloth, Fallon,**
4 **Martinez and Krause.**

5
6 Rep. Frullo: [calling] Timothy Harrison. Timothy we show that you're testifying for
7 yourself and for the bill. If you'll come up and state your name, your
8 position on the bill and who you're testifying for.

9
10 Tim Harrison: My name is Tim Harrison. I'm for ... the bill. I think it's a common sense
11 legislation that needs to be passed. I'm from the state of Ohio, originally. I
12 was a police officer, firefighter, paramedic for 29 years, retired. I worked
13 for TEEX NERRTC, the National Response and Rescue Training Center
14 at Texas A & M College, at Disaster City. So, good to see a lot of police
15 chiefs, fire chiefs from all over the country. There's these stories all over
16 but I'm gonna throw in right now, just got done talking about that. We had
17 two African lions loose on the interstate in Ohio. Well, during that
18 process, the sheriff, when you watch the documentary, I'm the elephant in
19 the living room and won all the awards, he actually says a beautiful quote
20 in that ... In the documentary, says, "Man, you've got to have a license for
21 your dog but you don't have to have nothing for a lion?" Now that's a
22 really, really smart quote because they have no way of finding out who
23 these lions belong to and they were attacking cars on the interstate.

24
25 We'll bring it home to you now. Dallas, Texas, in the documentary, while
26 we were down here I was working at Texas A & M. We ended up getting

1 called out because somebody had shot a tiger five times in the face with a
2 45 on the interstate in downtown Dallas. You can watch it here on the
3 documentary. And the person that tells us about it is actually the workman
4 that was out cleaning up the roads. He actually found the tiger. It was quite
5 sad.

6
7 And I'm gonna bring one more home to you too. On Boulevard Peninsula,
8 when you had Hurricane Ike, okay? Hurricane Ike came through, can you
9 find Waldo in this picture? It's the only church that was left standing.
10 There's an African lion in it. We just had one of our USAR people come
11 up here just a little bit ago that I work with in down in Texas. They can't
12 get in there because there's an African lion loose on the Boulevard
13 Peninsula and a tiger, private owners. And that's what we're up against, the
14 private ownership of these animals. We're not talking about people that
15 have the credentials and the AZA and all these different things. We're
16 talking about individuals that have no training whatsoever that shouldn't
17 have these animals in their house. I'm here for public safety period. I'm not
18 being paid to be here. I'm here to protect my fellow public safety officers.

19
20 I was part of the Zanesville Massacre, which happened in Zanesville, Ohio
21 where an individual had 56 animals, no U.S. state license, just a private
22 owner. 56 lions, tigers, grizzly bears, black bears, baboons, turned them
23 loose on the city of Zanesville. The county went bankrupt because of the
24 media and everything came in. They buried the animals. Guess what
25 happened? They had to keep cops out there for the next two or three years
26 because people were trying to dig up the bodies. They're worth more dead

1 than they are alive.

2
3 And this is myself with Jack Hanna and Sheriff Lutz when we were there
4 at the incident command post. So, it was a very disastrous situation. It was
5 the biggest one of its kind in United States history. We're asking for your
6 help. That's what I'm here for. I want to protect my fellow public safety
7 officers.

8
9 I want to protect the public and I also want to protect the animals. I took
10 six of these out of a house in Lancaster, Ohio. I took this picture and the
11 animals, we had in a trailer going to a sanctuary, down to the fire station
12 and asked the guys did you know these were in this house just down the
13 road? Oh, hell no. Now we fought a house fire in Dayton, Ohio, this is
14 how I got started 43 years ago, where a tiger jumped over us during a
15 house fire, out of the house. We've got enough problems. Let me put on a
16 list of what we got problems of already. We've got terrorism. We got fires.
17 We got natural disasters. Do we need to worry to go on the Boulevard
18 Peninsula to get tigers out of the way first? Or lions loose? We don't even
19 know they were even there.

20
21 You had an incident here where a woman was actually selling six tiger
22 cubs out of the van in McCullen, Texas. Out of the van in a Walmart
23 parking lot. I was involved with that cause I got on KBTX down there and
24 I said, "They're gonna give back those tiger cubs to her." "Oh no, no, no
25 Tim, they won't do that." Yes they will. There's no legislation here in your
26 state, this is 2006, that says that she can't get 'em back and she did. Same

1 in Zanesville. We saved six of those animals.

2
3 Saved them. Dated them. Out of the 49 was killed. She got her animals
4 back with a major lawsuit against the state for taking her animals that were
5 already loose off her property. So, we're trying to get back to some
6 common sense legislation. I think you guys got it. And one thing I want
7 you to think about too. We're talking about people with no, no whatsoever
8 USDA backing. I'll be real quick here. I know you guys have a time limit
9 and I want to get to your questions also too. We talked about "zoonomics"
10 all day. The guy who filmed the documentary with me almost died from ...

11
12 Rep Frullo: "Zoonomics."?

13
14 Tim Harrison: A bacterial infection he got from African lions. You can see it on the
15 extras. It's sad. His skin started sloughing off. These are things that the
16 Cleveland Clinic in Ohio had no idea how to take care. It had to be a zoo
17 vet and a deputy vet for the state of Ohio. I worked for the state of Ohio.
18 We've passed our legislation and guess what? Gentlemen and Ladies? It
19 works. It works. When you start taking away the ability of somebody to
20 have a tiger in their basement. It works. Just picture yourself as a police
21 officer or a firefighter going into somebody's house and there's a tiger in
22 there. Ed Kelso who started the bomb school at Quantico ... We were just
23 doing a congressional briefing in Washington, D.C. Ed Kelso who Tom
24 Clancy uses his stories for his books. Ed Kelso said, "I'd rather disarm a
25 nuclear bomb than have to go face to face with a tiger," which he has with
26 me.

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So, I want you to remember one thing, you can buy a tiger but you can't buy common sense. And I want you to always remember too, what you saw here. I'll let you have this but you have to remember too, anytime they tell you no police officers are in danger when these animals get out. Policemen, firemen, firemen, firemen, and guess what I am, a policeman, fireman, paramedic also had to catch this when it chewed through a door and attack police officers in downtown Dayton, Ohio as somebody's pet.

I want you also to think about, quickly here, is when you do have to pass legislation you get all these people saying we don't need legislation we got all this other stuff. The USDA can take care of us. Let me put it to you this way. We had what we thought was something in Ohio with Governor Strickland. We had an executive order. It was dropped and then all heck broke loose. It was the number one for the sale, auctions, as you'll see in the documentary I'm gonna give you. Auctions, wait till you see the auctions. Anything you can get. Anything you want. Stacked on top of each other, cougars, black leopards.

You can get anything you want. Guess where those breeders are coming now? Since we pushed them out of Ohio. Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. I know two of them moved to Texas already because of the lax legislation. So, I want to be here to help you out. I want to be able to tell you also too, real fast, cause these officers want me to tell you this. The ones that had to shoot those big cats and the bears and the chimps and everything at the Zanesville Massacre, four out of six of the officers that were on the SWAT

1 team have post-traumatic syndrome. Cannot go back to work. One actually
2 pees his pants when he's walking through the woods if a squirrel comes
3 down a tree too fast.

4
5 So, start thinking about your public safety officers. Start thinking about the
6 public, but the public safety officers too. Cause that's a lot of money you
7 invested in each one of those officers and firefighters to have to go out on
8 something that shouldn't be here in the first place. These animals don't
9 deserve to be here. They should never be here. We've got enough problems
10 as it is. It's better to keep them out of private hands. And I ... And if you
11 have any questions sir I'll be more than happy to answer and ma'am
12 anything you have.

13 Rep. Frullo: I'll a ... Members any questions? I'll ask you the question on insurance in
14 the bill where it drops that requirement. What are your thoughts on that?

15
16 Tim Harrison: With the insurance?

17
18 Rep. Frullo:: Right.

19
20 Tim Harrison: Yeah. Insurance is very good cause in the state of Ohio we have a million
21 dollar insurance for anybody who wants to get a permit to keep a tiger. We
22 haven't anybody able to do it yet. We also ... We have to have a
23 veterinarian actually okay that they can keep a tiger. We haven't any
24 veterinarians, they are all on our side now. My organization is Outreach
25 for Animals. The police officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency room
26 doctors, pediatric physicians and veterinarians from all over the country

1 and they haven't had ... None of them are gonna sign a piece of paper cause
2 we're on the frontline just like the young lady that was up here. We're
3 action on the frontline. 43 years I've been going out there and cleaning up
4 other people's messes. It's getting worse and worse and worse cause of the
5 internet and everything else too. But the insurance is a wise decision cause
6 that way people can't afford it. They can't ... The private person cannot get
7 a million dollar insurance. Look at with pit bulls. The same process.

8
9 So, the whole thing is you want to have some kind of ability, say if you
10 want to have this. I'd say don't allow them anymore whatsoever. Nobody
11 allowed to have them after a certain, you grandfather them in, after they're
12 passed, that's the end. You don't need to have any more of these animals
13 out there.

14
15 Rep. Frullo: Members are there any other questions? All right. Thank you for your
16 testimony.

17
18 Tim Harrison: One last thing. If you want to talk about statistics real quick. This is the
19 last bear that ate a young man in Ohio, in Cleveland, it was a wrestling
20 bear. Look at the bottom sir it says what the cause of death was. What's it
21 say?

22
23 Rep. Bonnen: Multiple, long, sharp wounds into the body with soft tissue, vascular,
24 skeletal and facial wounds. Accident while at work.

25
26 Tim Harrison: Accident at work. How do you follow statistics like that? That's what the

1 coroners are on our side now. There's another one on the back. From
2 constriction death, suffocation accident. Doesn't say anything about snake
3 or bear on it. So, that's when we have to look and somebody says, "There's
4 no stats out here." Talk to the emergency room doctors, call your
5 emergency room doctors, see if there's anything go through here. You'll be
6 very, very surprised. I appreciate you coming cause this is my home away
7 from home. I've been teaching at Texas for the last 12 years and I love here
8 at Texas A & M. I love this place. Thank you.

9
10 Rep. Frullo: Well thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

11
12 Tim Harrison: I'm gonna drop this off to you guys. [copy of the "Elephant in the Living
13 Room"]

14
15 Rep. Frullo: Oh, if you'll also tell us your position on the bill.

16
17 Tim Harrison: Oh. Is that it?

18
19 Rep. Frullo: Self. That's right. You represent yourself.

20
21 Tim Harrison: Myself. I represent myself. I'm for the bill.

22
23 Rep. Frullo: Okay. Thank you.

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