

P-05-796 Calling on the Welsh Government to Ban The Use of Wild Animals in Circuses in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 25.05.18

For the Petitions Committee meeting 05/6/2018.

Petition calling on the Welsh Government to ban the use of wild animals in circuses in Wales.

Thank you for considering this as an agenda item this morning. As I write the two remaining travelling circuses that use wild animals are touring Wales. Peter Jolly's Circus are in the north near Corwen. Circus Mondao started off in Chepstow, and have been to Porthcawl next stop is Tenby remaining in Wales until mid July.

There has been protests at every show.

Thomas Chipperfield with his show "Big Cats Live" , has on appeal been refused a circus licence to tour England by DEFRA. With The UK Government stating that they "are determined to bring a ban into force by January 2020". He can however still come to Wales, he has indicated he intends to tour this year .

I wish to thank those Members who took part in the debate on the 7/3/18, which was triggered by my petition which I presented to your Chair David J Rowlands AM in January. Members of all parties spoke passionately, each one favouring a ban.

I was pleased that Lesley Griffiths AM in her capacity as Cabinet Secretary for Energy Planning and Rural Affairs remained in the chamber to hear the debate and then chose to respond. It was wonderful to hear that she shared our concerns and did think that travelling circuses that use wild animals have no part in a modern Wales.

While I understand the need for consideration of the best way to bring a ban into place, I am dismayed to note that a firm timescale has yet to be announced. I welcome the Cabinet Secretary's announcement that a statement will be released in the Summer. But as the information above shows yet again circuses that use wild animals are touring our proud Country. Every year since 2015 we have had statements released on this subject by the Welsh Government, and every year the animals remain on the road in Wales.

I note that Lesley Griffiths did share the information in her response that the former Minister for Environment and Rural Affairs Rebecca Evans AM had looked at bringing legislation forward in 2015 via the Animal Welfare Act. But Rebecca and

her advisers ruled out this way forward. Surely then the route of bringing a ban into force via primary legislation should be looked at, which is the route Scotland took earlier this year.

I am very concerned as are certain members like Simon Thomas AM and Bethan Sayed AM. That if we delay further than due to the Brexit issue these powers may be lost and therefore Wales may not be able to act in this matter.

It seems every other country around us, Scotland, the Republic of Ireland and even England are standing up and making it clear how they feel. My late Father Richard Arthur Wyn Jones, instilled in me a firm belief that once we – Cymru had our own Parliament we would be able to set our own agenda and standards that others would see and indeed follow. This is a matter devolved to our Assembly, an Assembly I know Members believe passionately in. This isn't a political issue to my mind, but an animal welfare issue.

So I would like to ask you today to consider contacting Lesley Griffiths AM Cabinet Secretary for Energy Planning and Rural Affairs to see if any more progress has been made in establishing a firm timescale for legislation to be brought forward by the Welsh Government.

Once again I thank you for considering this matter today.

Linda Joyce-Jones 25/5/2018. Arfon Constituency, Caernarfon Gwynedd.