

News Release
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Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge Asks for Support of Proposed Big Cat Legislation
Big Cat Public Safety Act Would Protect Big Cats, People

Eureka Springs, Ark. (Thurs., Feb. 28, 2019) – Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge (TCWR) says legislation recently reintroduced into the House of Representatives would create a safer environment for both big cats living in captivity in the U.S. and the general public whom they pose a threat to.

The Big Cat Public Safety Act – H.R. 1380 would prohibit privatized ownership of big cats without a proper USDA Class C Exhibitor License and outlaw organizations from doing cub petting and hands-on photo ops.

TCWR's website explains that in cub petting operations, cubs are removed from their mothers immediately after birth so they can be used for the program and the mother can immediately be bred again. The website goes on to say that because of this, "cubs do not get vital nutrients and natural antibodies from their mother's milk," and "the mother's body is so exhausted from breeding that they get infections or die prematurely."

Aside from "overbreeding," the organization goes on to list other implications of the current flimsy laws regarding big cat ownership and exploitation in the U.S., citing "safety," concerns, "abuse and neglect, improper nutrition," and a "lack of options" when the animal needs to be rehomed.

Public safety in relation to privatized ownership was a recent issue when a tiger was found inside a vacant Houston, TX, home in early February. According to TCWR, "Since 1990, there have been at least 365 reported dangerous incidents involving big cats," with emphasis on the word "reported."

"Since there's no official registry, and it's estimated there are anywhere from 7,000-10,000 big cats living in the U.S., who knows how many injuries and incidents go unreported," TCWR REPRESENTATIVE said.

TCWR released information on the proposed bill in a blog post Wednesday. The post went on to issue the following plea: “We need you to email your Congressional Representatives to let them know about The Big Cat Public Safety Act - H.R. 1380. You can visit our Advocacy page to send an email to your Representatives directly! It is straightforward, just enter your name and address and our system will find your representatives, we've even written example emails for your Reps! The emails are customized whether they are members of the House or Senate, also if they are past supporters, current co-sponsors, or uninformed about the Big Cat Public Safety Act.”

Those who wish to read the full blog post and send an email to their Representative can do so at: <https://www.turpentinecreek.org/big-cat-public-safety-act-reintroduced/>.

For more information, please visit <https://www.turpentinecreek.org/bcpsa/>.

For updates, please “Like” Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TurpentineCreekWildlifeRefuge/> and follow them on Twitter and Instagram @turpentinecreek.

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About Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge

Founded in 1992, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization operating one of America’s largest big cat sanctuaries. The 450-acre refuge, located 7 miles south of Eureka Springs, is America’s premier big cat wildlife refuge. Turpentine Creek does not buy, sell, trade, or breed our animals. We are a hands-off facility and do not allow contact with the animals in our care. We are accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, a member of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, a member of Tigers in America, USDA Licensed and Arkansas Game and Fish Licensed. Our Mission is to provide lifetime refuge for abandoned, abused, and neglected "Big Cats" with emphasis on Tigers, Lions, Leopards, and Cougars.

Additional Information Sources & Photos

<http://www.TurpentineCreek.org>

https://www.facebook.com/TurpentineCreekWildlifeRefuge/photos_stream

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