

The American Federation Of Aviculture Inc. And Other Animal Groups Oppose H.R. 669

The American Federation of Aviculture Inc. and other animal groups urged pet owners to contact representatives participating in a hearing on H.R. 669 and ask that the bill be killed.

By BirdChannel News Division

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Photo courtesy of Melissa Bellande, FL

H.R. 669 is a bill that bans possession, import or export to the U.S. transport between states or breeding of nonnative species in the U.S.

The American Federation of Aviculture Inc. (AFA), the Avicultural Society of America (ASA) and the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) issued an action alert together that opposes H.R. 669, a bill banning most nonnative animals in the United States.

"H.R. 669 is an 'anti-animal bill'. There is no amendment that can fix this bill," states the action alert.

H.R. 669 is a bill that bans possession, import or export to the United States, transport between states or breeding of nonnative animal species in the United States.

H.R. 669 excludes some animals from this possible ban, including dogs, cats, horses, goldfish, domestic rabbits and some farm animals. The bill also notes that the Secretary of the Interior can exclude other animal species that are deemed "common and clearly domesticated." Any species not excluded must go through an assessment process to determine its possible negative impact to the economy, environment, other animal species and human health. Supporters of H.R. 669 believe it prevents harm to these areas from nonnative, invasive species.

The AFA, ASA and NAIA believe that if H.R. 669 passes, "Most nonnative species of animal (i.e. exotic animals) won't remain in the United States much longer. That means your exotic pet bird, reptile, fish or mammal."

The action alert urged people to voice opposition to the bill by contacting their representative before April 23, 2009, when the bill will be heard by a subcommittee. It also noted other actions people can take to oppose the bill.

H.R. 669 harms everyone involved with animals — pet owners, breeders, rescuers, rehabilitators, zoos and service or product providers, according to the alert from the AFA, ASA and NAIA.

"The result of this bill will be to put a stop domestic breeding of most endangered or threatened species in the United States for zoos, conservation, or reintroduction programs," state the AFA, ASA and NAIA.

Both the AFA and ASA are nonprofit national avicultural organizations that educate people about birds, with the AFA focusing on captive birds. The NAIA is an alliance of various groups that promote animal welfare.