



IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2004

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SF Board of Supervisors Committee Votes for Immediate Transfer of Elephants from San Francisco Zoo to CA Sanctuary

SF Zoo urged to join ranks of Detroit Zoo in sending elephants to sanctuary on ethical grounds

San Francisco . . . The City Services Committee reviewed the situation regarding the elephants at the City-owned San Francisco Zoo at a hearing today and voted to strengthen Supervisor Fiona Ma's resolution regarding transferring the elephants to animal sanctuaries. The Committee specified that the relocation process must begin immediately and that the elephants should be sent to the PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society) sanctuary in California under the supervision of PAWS personnel. The Committee also removed language regarding the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA). The Board's action comes on a day when another public zoological park — the Detroit Zoo — made front-page news with its decision to voluntarily close its elephant exhibits and send its elephants to sanctuaries because it recognized that it cannot provide adequate care for elephants. (See http://www.freep.com/news/metro/zoo20_20040520.htm).

“We applaud Board of Supervisors President Matt Gonzalez, Supervisors Fiona Ma and Bevan Dufty, and the Detroit Zoo for their courage and compassion in acknowledging the devastating impacts of zoo confinement on elephants,” said Dr. Elliot Katz, president of In Defense of Animals, one of the organizations that has been advocating for the release of the elephants at the San Francisco Zoo. The full Board will vote on the amended resolution Tuesday. “We urge the Supervisors to follow Detroit's humane example and make San Francisco a city that puts the welfare of elephants first.” In March, Sherri Franklin from the Commission of Animal Control and

Welfare recommended that the Board vote to immediately transfer the elephants to the PAWS sanctuary, only a 2-1/2 hour drive from San Francisco.

Controversy has surrounded the San Francisco Zoo since the deaths of two of its elephants, Calle and Maybelle, in just a seven-week period this spring. The zoo has said that it would transfer the two surviving elephants, Tinkerbelle and Lulu, to a sanctuary *or another zoo*, but has refused to commit to a time or place for the transfer, insisting instead that the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) will make the decision about the elephants' futures.

In the wild, elephants travel tens of miles a day and live 60-70 years. At the zoo, elephants are held in lots of less than 1 acre. The San Francisco Zoo has a history of elephants dying prematurely: on April 2, 1995, Penny was euthanized at the age of 41; on March 7, 2004, Calle was euthanized at 37; and on April 22, 2004, Maybelle died at 43.