

## **Rebuttal to Ringling Bros. ad in CT newspapers (week of May 7) – Ad in blue / rebuttal in red**

As the home of P.T. Barnum, Connecticut has a special relationship with Ringling Brothers circus. Ringling Brothers is a leader in the care and conservation of the Asian elephant. With the largest herd of Asian elephants in the Western Hemisphere, and more than 137 years of experience, Ringling Brothers is committed to the well being and preservation of this endangered species. The elephants at Ringling Brothers have performed in Connecticut nearly every year since the show first appeared here in 1919.

Now all that history may come to an end.

**THE REAL FACTS ABOUT CONNECTICUT HOUSE BILL 7019 --If passed, CT House bill 7019 would prevent Ringling Brothers from coming back to your state.**

HB-7019 does not prevent Ringling Bros from bringing elephants to Connecticut, it just prevents them from using bull hooks or electric prods on elephants. If they choose not to come to Connecticut, recognize that a market system is based on profit maximization and The Big Apple Circus or Cole Bros Circus or the Moscow Circus, all of which do not have elephants, would be more than glad to come to Connecticut.;

**--House bill 7019 will unnecessarily prohibit the use of elephant guides, the basic and widely accepted tool of responsible elephant management.**

Here is what The Elephant Managers Association says about responsible management in a letter to the Environment Chairs on March 30 2007:"...different animal species are trained using "operant conditioning". This is a type of learning in which the probability of a behavior is increased or decreased by consequences that follow. This teaching process includes positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and punishment.

**--House bill 7019 is wrong and will not help elephants. The guide is used as an extension of an elephant trainer's arm to lead and direct the animals, much like reins for a horse or a leash for a dog.**

To call the bull hook an extension of a person's arm is ludicrous unless the person has a hook on the end of their arm. Equally ridiculous is comparing it to reins which are attached to a bit that rests in a horse's mouth in a space between the teeth or a leash which certainly doesn't have pointed hooks.

**--Leading veterinary experts say that prohibiting the use of the guide would compromise their ability to care for the elephants.**

Elephant sanctuaries have no trouble taking care of their elephants without the use of a bull hook.

**--the guide is a proven and humane husbandry tool. The care and handling of elephants in zoos and circuses are already subject to strict federal, state and local animal welfare and cruelty laws. House Bill 7019 is not needed and will not help protect the elephants.**

**--All circuses and traveling exhibitors that perform in Connecticut, including Ringling Brothers, are subject to unannounced inspections by the Federal Government to ensure compliance with the Animal welfare Act and are also inspected by government inspectors.**

The USDA inspects twice a year at best and one of those times is at the home base. USDA also does not inform Connecticut if a violation has occurred in another state where the circus has been. The USDA is notoriously under-funded as is our own Dept.of Agriculture.

CALL TO ACTION

If you want Ringling Brothers to continue to entertain Connecticut's children of all ages, your state representatives need to hear from you.  
CALL NOW

House Democrats-----860-240-8500  
House republicans---860-240-8700

Ask your representative to vote against this Bill because it is unnecessary, and will not improve animal welfare. House Bill 7019 would actually make proper elephant care including veterinary treatments more difficult and dangerous. PLEASE HELP US KEEP THE CIRCUS COMING TO CONNECTICUT.