



**PETA**

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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AHA Board of Directors:

On April 24, the animal protection community was shocked to hear your organization's Film and Television Unit director, Karen Rosa, "wholeheartedly" opposing a proposed bullhook ban in California. This ban would go a long way toward protecting elephants from abuse, and Rosa's testimony is a direct contradiction of AHA's mission "to prevent cruelty, abuse, neglect, and exploitation" of animals. AHA is the only animal advocacy group siding with the circus industry in opposition to a ban on the use of this cruel device on elephants.

We are writing to request that the American Humane Association (AHA) reverse its current position and join People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the Humane Society of the United States, Animal Protection Institute, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, United Animal Nations, and numerous other animal advocacy groups by supporting legislation that would ban the use of bullhooks on elephants.

Despite its rough appearance, elephants' skin is as sensitive as ours is. Bullhooks resemble fireplace pokers and, by design, have only one purpose—to inflict pain on elephants. Bullhooks cause suffering and trauma, including lacerations, puncture wounds, swelling, abscesses, and bruises. In her book *Medical Management of the Elephant*, Dr. Susan Mikota cites a study that found that bullhook wounds account for 28 percent of traumatic injuries to elephants' skin. I have enclosed statements from a vet, a former zookeeper, and a former circus trainer confirming that bullhooks cause elephants pain. I have also enclosed a DVD that demonstrates how elephants are tortured with this tool.

Bullhooks are not a safety device and will not protect people in any way during the filming of commercials or movies that use elephants. I have enclosed a partial list of dangerous incidents that have taken place at circuses since 1990; these incidents occurred despite—or perhaps because of—the use of bullhooks. Former Palm Bay, Fla., police officer Blayne Doyle—who was on duty when an elephant performing at a circus ran amok with a mother and four children on her back—has testified across the country against the use of bullhooks, as these cruel devices can never stop a rampaging elephant.

Please let us know that AHA will not align itself with elephant abusers by issuing an official statement of its position against the use of bullhooks. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this issue further.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

RaeLeann Smith, Circus Specialist

AN INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED  
TO PROTECTING  
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS