

Animal Rights Industry and American Family Business

The Animal Rights Industry attempts to crush small business in the name of conservation.

October 30, 2009

The Animal Rights Industry has American family businesses on the ropes. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) mischaracterizes science, and uses money and influence in an attempt to crush small business in the name of conservation.

In the weeks leading up to a congressional hearing on the potential addition of Boa constrictors and pythons to the Injurious Wildlife List of the Lacey Act, the HSUS has shifted into overdrive in an effort to malign hard working American family business owners while intentionally mischaracterizing science to support their ideological drive to end the trade in reptiles. It is a publically held position of the HSUS that ownership of reptiles should be illegal. They would also like to see the end of livestock farming, hunting and biomedical research. The HSUS is using a couple of bill proposals (H.R. 2811/S. 373 aka The Python Ban, the original intent of which was to stop the import of Burmese pythons) as a tool to destroy the captive bred trade in reptiles in the U.S. They have deployed lobbyists from their non profit 501c3 and their Political Action Committee to pressure policy makers.

The United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK) has done quite well advocating for the reptile trade. USARK was successful in getting H.R. 2811 narrowed to address only the Burmese python and Northern African python, with an agreement in principle to allow the captive bred trade to continue. A similar agreement was made on S. 373. Now HSUS, upset about concessions and sensing the political environment is ripe for enforcing their extreme ideology, is pressuring members of Congress and the Senate to renege on agreements with USARK amending the bills to create an all out ban on all pythons as well as Boa constrictors. Boas and ball pythons are harmless and are some of the most popular pet reptiles in the world. If HSUS is successful in using congress to destroy the reptile industry thousands of hardworking Americans will be bankrupted over night.

Many scientists agree that the HSUS proposals are disingenuous and will do nothing to address real conservation issues. This is all politically driven by the HSUS. They have no good policy proposals on the table. There are more than 4 million Boa constrictors and pythons in captivity today. These high end captive breeding projects run by small entrepreneurs have been in existence for more than 30 years. HSUS wants to use a sensationalized fear of Burmese pythons in the Everglades to shut down a 3 billion dollar a year industry. Is this really about conservation or is it a veiled effort for the Animal Rights Industry to deal a death blow to the reptile trade?

Andrew Wyatt is the President of the United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK) and has been an avid herp enthusiast for more than 35 years. He has traveled the world and has had his animals featured in a number of television productions. For more information about USARK, [click here](#) .

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