

## Eye of the Hurricane

**By Russ Case**

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The jury is still out on HR669. At the risk of being redundant, I'm going to write about HR669 again this week. This was the bill on which a hearing was held on April 23, one that if passed would make many common pets, including most of the most popular reptile and amphibian pets, illegal to own. Read all about it [here](#).

The HR669 hearing was held last week, on April 23. (Click [here](#) for the update.) Thanks to the efforts of pet/reptile industry watchdog groups, such as PIJAC and USARK, and grassroots efforts involving many thousands of reptile owners, the subcommittee that was meeting on HR669 was inundated, and pretty impressed, I think, by thousands of letters and phone calls indicating why this ill-conceived bill should be stopped. But the bill is not dead (although USARK's Andrew Wyatt called it "effectively dead"), and what happens next is still in question. As I write this we're in the midst of the 10-day review period during which the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife decides the fate of the bill. Essentially, we're in the eye of the hurricane, a calm period while waiting to see what happens next.

HR669 may move forward, but then there will be further public comment opportunities. Or it may be killed. Or it could be rewritten to address some of the many problems that were inherent with it. But make no mistake, no matter what happens with HR669, the groups that are against the keeping of exotic pets will not tire in their efforts to end your hobby. If this bill dies you can bet another with similar intentions will surface, supported by groups such as Defenders of Wildlife, the Humane Society of the United States and, of course, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

Here at ReptileChannel we'll strive to keep you informed about this and future legal efforts that may affect your reptilekeeping hobby. Remember the Notice of Inquiry and Senate Bill 373 are also still in limbo. You can also check the PIJAC and USARK websites for information. It would serve you well to stay informed of not just this but other legal wrangling that may be taking place.

Maybe someday the calm experienced in the eye of the hurricane will become the norm, and the clouds that are created by environmentalist/animal rights groups will dissipate once and for all. One can hope, and I, for one, will continue to do so.

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