

January 7, 2011

## **Message from Ohio Association of Animal Owners, OAAO,** <http://oaaio.us/>

We knew that outgoing Governor Strickland promised HSUS to ban exotic animals in Ohio. He made his parting shot at us yesterday when he signed an "emergency executive order" to accomplish that. Although the order is only good for 90 days, a lot of damage can be done to our industry and our pocketbooks during that 90 days. It's time to go to work -- **right now**.

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Here, very briefly, are the points we need to address:

1. This is a **power grab** by the DNR to seize control of, and ultimately shut down, Ohio's exotic animal industry.
2. Ohio Revised Code Section 1531.02 clearly shows the DNR does not have statutory authority over exotic animals. It states: "The ownership of and the title to all wild animals in this state, **not legally confined or held by private ownership legally acquired, is in the state, which holds such title in trust for the benefit of all the people...**" Governor Strickland chose to leave out the part about animals that are legally acquired, confined and held by private ownership. The DNR has **no** authority over non-native/exotic animals, so the emergency rule is flawed and will likely be overturned if and when the permanent rule is filed with JCARR (Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review). **Governor Strickland lied, and the DNR is willing to participate in this Governor-ordered power grab.**
3. The order **exempts** AZA- and Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries-accredited facilities. Both are **private corporations** with financial links to HSUS. The emergency order is **unconstitutional** and creates a **monopoly** for those two corporations, while shutting down the other USDA- and DNR-licensed facilities that have these types of animals; that includes the drive-through animal parks, private zoos, and licensed breeders/dealers/exhibitors throughout Ohio. In Governor Strickland's own words last fall, the exotic animal industry is a 12.5 billion dollar/yr industry in Ohio. His emergency order will shut down a large part of that 12.5 billion dollar industry. Ohio cannot afford more job loss.

4. There is no exotic animal emergency in Ohio. Licensed animal owners, breeders and exhibitors have safely and securely kept these animals for many, many years and are subject to regular, unannounced government inspections to ensure that the public and the animals are not at risk. This emergency order is fueled by animal rights extremism and scaremongering, and it is a direct attack on commerce and private enterprise in Ohio. This order was not requested by a government agency (the DNR) as Governor Strickland indicates in paragraph 5 of the emergency order; it was agreed to by HSUS, Ohio Farm Bureau, and the Governor himself.

5. Exotic animal owners throughout Ohio rallied to vote Ted Strickland out of office, due to his "back-door deal" with HSUS. We voted John Kasich in, convinced that he would not support that back-door deal. **We now appeal to incoming Governor Kasich to immediately vacate this emergency executive order which will cripple the exotic animal industry in Ohio.**

**Action required:**

1. Call incoming Governor John Kasich at (614)824-2017 **and** email him at [john@kasichforohio.com](mailto:john@kasichforohio.com) with the above information. Put it in your own words, tailor it to your operation, or copy and paste it as you see it, but do it **now**. Don't wait!

We will be sending out another email as soon as we have the contact information for incoming DNR Director David Mustine. It is a waste of time to contact Gov. Strickland or outgoing DNR Director Sean Logan, so don't spend your time and energy on them. They've already done their damage. It's up to us to make incoming Governor Kasich understand the ramifications of this emergency order so that he'll vacate it. Those of you who have friendly contacts in the media, go ahead and pass this information on to them.

Polly Britton  
Legislative Agent  
Ohio Association of Animal Owners

PS I may also be emailing you with a better phone number and/or email address for John Kasich; but for now, go with the one listed above.

See more: <http://www.rexano.org/StatePages/OhioFrame.htm>

[www.REXANO.org](http://www.REXANO.org)