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January 20, 2015

Dear Chairman Larry Powell & Members of the Committee:

I am writing to voice my support for Senate Bill 97.

Passage of this bill will give necessary relief to credible zoological institutions such as Tanganyika Wildlife Park, in Goddard, who wish to utilize their cats as ambassador animals in their park and for educational outreach programs.

I can say first hand, having many years of experience working with ambassador cats, that there is no better way to bring conservation awareness to people than an experience with a cheetah, clouded leopard or other qualifying cat.

Unfortunately, the hands off policy demonstrated by the current Kansas law prevents credible, professional zoological facilities such as Tanganyika from providing that crucial connection to stimulate awareness and promote species conservation.

Experiencing an up close and personal encounter with one of these amazing cats can be a life changing event and encourage someone to take a more active role in the conservation of these amazing animals. At the Columbus Zoo our cheetah ambassadors have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for cheetah conservation programs in the wild.

I have worked extensively with Tanganyika Wildlife Park, utilizing their cats and staff on numerous occasions doing national TV shows around the country along with shows at universities, civic events, and zoo fund-raisers. Their professionalism is beyond question.

Tanganyika and other accredited zoological facilities in Kansas (AZA and ZAA) should be able to utilize cats as ambassadors at their facilities in accordance with their respective accreditation standards. Doing so will present an array of eye opening experiences for the people of Kansas, and will stimulate visitors to become more involved in the conservation of these incredible cats.

Please adopt Senate Bill 97.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Hanna", followed by a long horizontal line.

Jack Hanna
Director Emeritus, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
Host, *Jack Hanna's Into the Wild* and *Jack Hanna's Wild Countdown*