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January 21, 2010

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid:

As Directors from America's leading zoos and aquariums—all accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)—we are writing to request your support for removing AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums from an exclusionary provision now being considered by Congress.

This provision – which prevents worthy, job-creating projects at accredited zoos and aquariums from being considered on their merits – was included in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (H.R. 1) and is now, by reference, included in the House-passed *Jobs for Main Street Act* (H.R. 2847) under Sec. 1702. It states:

“None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this Act may be used by any State or local government, or any private entity, for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course, or swimming pool.”

This institutional profiling is unfair and unwise.

The many projects that AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums are ready to submit for consideration would create good jobs immediately and receive strong approval from their communities and the wider American public. They meet the highest criteria established by Congress.

The 229 U.S.-based AZA-accredited and certified facilities are important economic engines in their communities, supporting more than 121,000 jobs, generating an estimated \$8.4 billion in economic activity a year, and welcoming 175 million visitors annually. Further, many of us provide a wide range of educational and environmental services to our communities, with a special emphasis on reaching out to underserved children and youth – an especially important element of our public service during these recessionary times.

We ask nothing more than a level playing field. Supporting the ability of accredited zoos and aquariums to fairly compete for funds for worthy projects is good social policy, good legislative policy, and good economic policy.

We respectfully ask for your support to ensure that projects at America's AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums be fairly considered on their merits, and that the exclusionary language be removed from the *Jobs for Main Street Act*, and also be kept out of future legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

ALABAMA

Dr. William Foster, CEO
Birmingham Zoo

ARIZONA

Jeff Williamson, President
Arizona Zoological Society

Robert Edison, Executive Director
Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

Bert Castro, President/CEO
Phoenix Zoo

Susan Basford, Director
Reid Park Zoo

ARKANSAS

Michael E. Blakely, Director
Little Rock Zoo

CALIFORNIA

John A. Frawley, CEO
Aquarium of the Bay

Dr. Jerry Schubel, President/CEO
Aquarium of the Pacific

Dr. Nigella Hillgarth, Executive Director
Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institute of
Oceanography

Mike Schaadt, Director
Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

Alan Baker, Director
Charles Paddock Zoo

Scott Barton, CEO/Executive Director
Fresno Chaffee Zoo

Gregg Owens, Director
Happy Hollow Zoo

Stacey Johnson, President/CEO
Living Desert

John Lewis, Director
Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens

Julie Packard, Executive Director
Monterey Bay Aquarium

Joel Parrott, Executive Director
Oakland Zoo

Mary Healy, Director/CEO
Sacramento Zoo

Dr. Nancy Anne Lang, Director
Safari West

Doug Myers, CEO/Executive Director
San Diego Zoo

Doug Myers, CEO/Executive Director
San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park

Tanya Peterson, Executive Director/President
San Francisco Zoological Gardens

Kent Yamaguchi, Director
Santa Ana Zoo

Rich Block, Director/CEO
Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens

Gretchen Ziegler, Zoo Manager
Sequoia Park Zoo

Christopher Andrews, Director
Steinhart Aquarium

COLORADO

Robert Chastain, President/CEO
Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

Darlene Kobobel, President
Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center

Craig Piper, President/CEO
Denver Zoological Gardens

Jonnene McFarland, Director
Pueblo Zoo

CONNECTICUT

Gregg Dancho, Director
Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo

Dr. Stephen Coan, President/CEO
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration

DELAWARE

Nancy Falasco, Director
Brandywine Zoo

FLORIDA

Keith Winsten, Executive Director
Brevard Zoo

Joe Montisano, CEO
Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Gardens

Thom Stork, President/CEO
The Florida Aquarium

Tony Vecchio, Director
Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

Harold Kramer, General Manager/V.P.
Lion Country Safari

Dr. Allyson Walsh, Director
Lubee Bat Conservancy

Eric Stephens, Director
Miami Metrozoo

David Tetzlaff, Executive Director
Naples Zoo

Dr. Terry L. Maple, President/CEO
Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park

Jack A. Brown, Director
Santa Fe College Teaching Zoo

John Brueggen, General Director
St. Augustine Alligator Farm

Craig Pugh, Acting CEO
Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo

GEORGIA

Anthony Godfrey, President/COO
Georgia Aquarium

Dennis Kelly, President/CEO
Zoo Atlanta

HAWAII

Stephen Walker, Director
Honolulu Zoo

IDAHO

William Gersonde, Superintendent
Tautphaus Park Zoo

Steve Burns, Director
Zoo Boise

ILLINOIS

Dr. Stuart D. Strahl, President/CEO
Chicago Zoological Society - Brookfield Zoo

Susan L. Wahlgren, Director
Cosley Zoo

Ted Beattie, President/CEO
John G. Shedd Aquarium

Kevin Bell, President/CEO
Lincoln Park Zoo

Jay Tetzloff, Superintendent
Miller Park Zoo

Thomas Stalf, Director
Niabi Zoo

Yvonne Strode, Director
Peoria Zoo

David Webster, Director
Scovill Zoo

INDIANA

Jim Anderson, Director
Fort Wayne Children's Zoo

Michael Crowther, President/CEO
Indianapolis Zoological Society, Inc.

Amos Morris, Executive Director
Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden

Terrence DeRosa, Director
Potawatomi Zoo

IOWA

Mark Vukovich, CEO
Blank Park Zoo

Jerry Enzler, Executive Director
National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium

KANSAS

Lisa Keith, Director
David Traylor Zoo of Emporia

Charlotte Poepperling, Director
Hutchinson Zoo

Kathy Sexson, Director
Lee Richardson Zoo

Kathy Tolbert, Director
Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure

Mark Reed, Executive Director
Sedgwick County Zoo

Scott Shoemaker, Director
Sunset Zoo

KENTUCKY

John Walczak, Director
Louisville Zoological Garden

LOUISIANA

Lee Ann Whitt, Director
Alexandria Zoological Park

L. Ronald Forman, President/CEO
Audubon Aquarium of the Americas

L. Ronald Forman, President/CEO
Audubon Zoo

L. Ronald Forman, President/CEO
Audubon Center for Research of Endangered
Species

Phil Frost, Director
BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo

MARYLAND

Donald Hutchinson, President/CEO
The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

David Pittenger, Executive Director
National Aquarium in Baltimore

Joel M. Hamilton, Director
Salisbury Zoological Park

MASSACHUSETTS

Dr. William Langbauer, Director
Buttonwood Park Zoo

Jean Benchimol, Director
Capron Park Zoo

John Linehan, President/CEO
Franklin Park Zoo

Bud Ris, President/CEO
New England Aquarium

John Linehan, President/CEO
Walter D. Stone Memorial Zoo

MICHIGAN

Gregory Geise, President/CEO
Binder Park Zoo

Ron L. Kagan, Executive Director/CEO
Detroit Zoological Society

Bert Vescolani, Director
John Ball Zoological Gardens

Brenda Stringer, Executive Director
John Ball Zoological Society

Gerald Brady, Director
Potter Park Zoological Gardens

MINNESOTA

Michelle Furrer, Director
Como Park Zoo and Conservatory

Lee C. Ehmke, Director/CEO
Minnesota Zoological Garden

MISSISSIPPI

Beth Poff, Executive Director
Jackson Zoological Park

MISSOURI

Joseph Norton, Director
The Butterfly House

Mike Crocker, Superintendent
Dickerson Park Zoo

Randy Wisthoff, Director
Kansas City Zoo

Dr. Jeffrey Bonner, President/CEO
Saint Louis Zoo

MONTANA

John Heine, Executive Director
Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center

Jackie Worstell, Executive Director
ZooMontana

NEBRASKA

John Chapo, President/CEO
Lincoln Children's Zoo

Dennis Pate, Executive Director/CEO
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo

NEVADA

Adrienne Rowland, Director
Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Iain MacLeod, Executive Director
Squam Lakes Natural Science Center

NEW JERSEY

Greg Charbeneau, Executive Director
Adventure Aquarium

Timothy Gunther, Director
Bergen County Zoological Park

Dr. Bert Paluch, Director
Cape May County Park Zoo

Cindy Claus, Director
Jenkinson's Aquarium

Dr. Jeremy Goodman, Director
Turtle Back Zoo

NEW MEXICO

Richard Janser, Director
Albuquerque Biological Park

Ken Britt, Park Superintendent Sr.
Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park

NEW YORK

Mike Janis, Executive Director
Binghamton Zoo at Ross Park

James Breheny, V.P./Director
Bronx Zoo

Dr. Donna Fernandes, President /CEO
Buffalo Zoo

Jeff Sailer, Director
Central Park Zoo

Jon Forrest Dohlin, Director
New York Aquarium

Denise McClean, Director
Prospect Park Zoo

Dr. Scott Silver, Facility Director/Curator of
Animals
Queens Zoo

Chuck Doyle, Director
Rosamond Gifford Zoo

Larry Sorel, Executive Director
Seneca Park Zoo

John J. Caltabiano, Executive Director
Staten Island Zoo

Jonathan Meigs, Director
Trevor Zoo

Dr. Robert Cook, General Director/Executive
V.P.
Wildlife Conservation Society

NORTH CAROLINA

Glenn Dobrogosz, Executive Director
Natural Science Center & Animal Discovery of
Greensboro

David Jones, Director
North Carolina Zoological Park

Chris Gentile, Director
Western North Carolina Nature Center

NORTH DAKOTA

Kathy Diekman, Director
Chahinkapa Zoo

Paula R. Grimestad, Executive Director
Red River Zoo

Dana Pritschet, Director
Roosevelt Park Zoo

OHIO

Brian Hunt, CEO
African Safari Wildlife Park

L. Patricia Simmons, President & CEO
Akron Zoological Park

Mark J. Meister, President/CEO
The Boonshoft Museum of Discovery

Thane Maynard, Director
Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

Steve Taylor, Director
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Liz Fowler, Executive Director
Cleveland Zoological Society

Dale A. Schmidt, Executive Director
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

Dr. Anne Baker, CEO
Toledo Zoological Gardens

Dr. Evan S. Blumer, Executive Director
The Wilds

OKLAHOMA

Dwight Scott, Executive Director/CEO
Oklahoma City Zoological Park & Botanical
Garden

OREGON

Gary N. Gamer, CEO
Oregon Coast Aquarium

Mike Keele, Interim Director
Oregon Zoo

Dan Van Slyke, Executive Director
Wildlife Safari

PENNSYLVANIA

Clyde Peeling, Director
Clyde Peeling's Reptiland

William R. Konstant, Executive Director
Elmwood Park Zoo

Scott Mitchell, President/CEO
Erie Zoo

Patrick Mangus, Executive Director
National Aviary

Vikram Dewan, President/CEO
Philadelphia Zoo

Dr. Barbara Baker, President/CEO
Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium

Troy Stump, Director
ZOOAMERICA North American Wildlife Park

RHODE ISLAND

Jack Mulvena, Director
Roger Williams Park Zoo

SOUTH CAROLINA

Jeff Bullock, Director
Greenville Zoo

Palmer Krantz, Executive Director
Riverbanks Zoo & Garden

Kevin Mills, President/CEO
South Carolina Aquarium

SOUTH DAKOTA

Dan Miller, Director
Bramble Park Zoo

Elizabeth Whealy, President/CEO
Great Plains Zoo & Delbridge Museum of
Natural History

TENNESSEE

Dardenelle Long, Director
Chattanooga Zoo at Warner Park

James Vlna, Executive Director
Knoxville Zoological Gardens

Dr. Chuck Brady, President/CEO
Memphis Zoo

Richard K. Schwartz, President
Nashville Zoo, Inc.

Charles Arant, President/CEO
Tennessee Aquarium

TEXAS

W. K. Baker, Director
Abilene Zoological Gardens

Hayes Caldwell, Executive Director
Caldwell Zoo

Jim Fleshman, Director
Cameron Park Zoo

Daryl Richardson, Director
The Dallas World Aquarium

Gregg Hudson, Executive Director
Dallas Zoo

Michael Meadows, President/CEO
Dallas Zoological Society

Steve Marshall, Director
El Paso Zoo

Gordon Henley, Jr, Director
Ellen Trout Zoo

Michael Fouraker, Executive Director
Fort Worth Zoo

Patrick Condy, Executive Director
Fossil Rim Wildlife Center

Patrick M. Burchfield, Director
Gladys Porter Zoo

Rick Barongi, Director
Houston Zoo

J. Stephen McCusker, Executive Director
San Antonio Zoological Society

Thomas Schmid, President/CEO
Texas State Aquarium

UTAH

Tim Brown, Executive Director
Tracy Aviary

Craig Dinsmore, Executive Director
Utah's Hogle Zoo

VIRGINIA

David Orndorff, Director/Curator
Mill Mountain Zoo

Lynn Clements, Executive Director
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center

Greg Bockheim, Executive Director
Virginia Zoological Park

WASHINGTON

Gary Geddes, Director
Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

Gary Geddes, Director
Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium

John Braden, Director
Seattle Aquarium

Robert Davidson, CEO
Seattle Aquarium Society

Deborah Jensen, President/CEO
Woodland Park Zoo

WEST VIRGINIA

Penny Miller, Director
Oglebay's Good Zoo

WISCONSIN

James Hubing, Director
Henry Vilas Zoo

James H. Hook, President/CEO
International Crane Foundation

Charles Wikenhauser, Director
Milwaukee County Zoological Gardens

Neil S. Anderson, Director
Northeastern Wisconsin (NEW) Zoo

Jay Christie, President/CEO
Racine Zoological Gardens

Dr. Robert Davis, President/CEO
Zoological Society of Milwaukee