

DEMI MOORE

May 31, 2011

Dear Commissioner:

I am writing in support of a proposal that would protect elephants in circuses by banning the use of bullhooks and similar devices in Fulton County.

A bullhook is an ugly device that looks like a fireplace poker—it's a heavy rod with a sharp metal hook and spike on one end that is used by trainers to beat, jab, hook, and yank elephants in order to force them to perform difficult and confusing tricks. Their use also leads to injuries such as puncture wounds and abscesses.

My friends at PETA have gathered irrefutable evidence showing that the use of bullhooks to abuse elephants in circuses is routine. A recent undercover investigation of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus revealed that elephants were struck repeatedly with bullhooks in order to intimidate them and remind them that they need to do as they're told or suffer the painful consequences. And photos from Ringling's training compound illustrate that this abuse starts at a very early age. Baby elephants are torn from their mothers, bound with ropes, slammed to the ground, and gouged with bullhooks during violent training sessions. A trainer with the one of the elephant suppliers for UniverSoul Circus was caught on video viciously attacking elephants with a bullhook and instructing others to sink bullhooks into elephants' flesh and twist them until the animals screamed in pain.

Today, elephant sanctuaries and most zoos—including Zoo Atlanta—never use bullhooks or other weapon-like tools to punish elephants. Corporal punishment has been replaced with positive reinforcement, such as treats and praise. I hope you will extend that inherent decency to elephants used in circuses. I urge you to ban bullhooks. The elephants deserve our kindness, respect, and protection.

Thank you for your time. I can be reached through PETA's Michelle Cho at 323-644-7382, extension 25, or MichelleC@peta.org.

Yours truly,



Demi Moore