

Sarah Silverman

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to urge you to seize four ailing elephants traveling with the Ringling Bros. circus immediately. My friends at PETA have expert veterinary evidence showing that Nicole, Karen, Juliette, and Sara are being forced to perform grueling tricks despite suffering from lameness and, in the cases of Nicole and Karen, arthritis as well. Arthritis is the number one reason for euthanasia in captive elephants, and veterinarians have cautioned that if their situation does not improve, Juliette and Sara will suffer life-threatening arthritis just as Karen and Nicole now do.

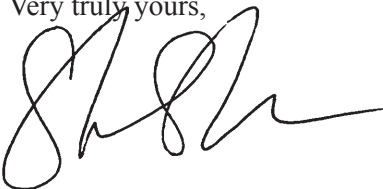
PETA first reported this evidence to the U.S. Department of Agriculture *more than nine months ago* and has been told that the case is being investigated. But these suffering elephants remain on the road with the circus, where they are chained on hard surfaces for many hours and even days at a time and have been forced hundreds of times to perform tricks that aggravate their condition.

Performing circus tricks is a painful struggle for these animals. Yet Ringling's elephant handlers—who have no veterinary experience whatsoever—continually stab the animals with sharp metal rods called “bullhooks” in order to keep them performing despite their ailments. To cover up bloody wounds from these bullhooks, Ringling uses a gray powdery makeup called “Wonder Dust.”

As you can see in this *Washington Post* exposé, life for elephants with Ringling is hell from the moment they're born at the circus's breeding center. Baby elephants are prematurely torn away from their mothers, tied up, slammed to the ground, beaten, and shocked with electric prods until they learn to stand on their heads and perform other meaningless stunts that these highly intelligent, sophisticated animals would never do in the wild.

Won't you please enforce the Animal Welfare Act and immediately remove these lame and arthritic elephants from Ringling Bros. before they are forced to suffer further? I can be reached through PETA's Michelle Cho at 323-644-7382, extension 25, or MichelleC@peta.org. I look forward to hearing your decision.

Very truly yours,



Sarah Silverman