



March 13, 2017

Amy Dickerson  
Managing Director  
Lancaster Event Center

Dear Ms. Dickerson,

I'm writing again on behalf of PETA regarding the James Cristy Cole Circus, which recently used bears from Castle's Bears and is scheduled to have bears again at your venue as part of the Sesostris Shrine Circus. As you know, recent [video footage](#) covered in the [Daily Mail](#) shows bears urinating in distress as they were tethered, muzzled, prodded, and forced to perform cruel and confusing tricks. I urge you to ensure that bears and other wild animals will not be exploited at your venue and to adopt a humane, modern policy that bans wild-animal acts at the Lancaster Event Center going forward.

Bears are complex, far-ranging animals who require opportunities to climb, dig, forage, and build nests. Because their instinctual needs are thwarted, the animals used by Castle's Bears endure intolerable lives. Dressed in ridiculous costumes, muzzled, and tethered, they're forced to perform confusing and likely painful tricks in crowded arenas day in and day out. According to bear expert Jay Pratte—who has more than 25 years of experience in captive-bear husbandry and viewed footage of a performance last month—these bears are being coerced or forced to participate. He also notes that their training "was very clearly accomplished by aversive means," as evidenced when one bear urinated after his or her leash was pulled and again when the animal was forced to stand and walk on front legs. Pratte went on to state that "[u]nnatural behaviors (human chairs, bipedal and front leg walking) cause distress [and] potential long term physiological issues as they are counter to animal's natural body and abilities" and that the noise and crowd are clearly affecting the bears, who are undoubtedly stressed by the audience.

Because you didn't respond to my earlier correspondence, I'm left with no option but to alert our members and supporters that the Lancaster Event Center does not share their concerns regarding animal welfare and is not interested in addressing the cruelty inflicted on bears used and abused for entertainment.

Please prioritize animal welfare by canceling the bear show and committing to hosting only animal-free circuses in the future. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

John Di Leonardo, M.S.  
Senior Campaigner, Animals in Entertainment  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

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