

Moran Sponsors Discrimination Bill Against Circus to Censor American Institution

November 2, 2011 - - The baseless legislation introduced today by Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) discriminatorily targets traveling circuses, including Representative Moran's own constituent *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus*, the largest traveling circus in the United States. The bill is designed to censor entertainment and remove the right to let the American public choose for itself whether *Ringling Bros. Circus*, a 141-year old American institution, can continue to operate. In this day and age, when businesses are failing, the economy is struggling and families are worried, Congressman Moran is busying himself with legislation that immediately threatens to end the livelihood of more than 250 families working right here in his own Congressional District for a family-owned business in order to pander instead to animal rights activists. Nationwide, the bill would destroy the jobs of more than 750 full-time employees working for the circus, that include Teamsters and the American Federation of Musicians, and thousands of additional local jobs that result in every city that the circus plays across the country.

The legislation is based upon the rhetoric of animal rights activists, who oppose all animals in captivity and entertainment, rather than sound science or any familiarity with basic animal husbandry or handling. More importantly, Feld Entertainment, Inc., the producer of *Ringling Bros. Circus*, tried repeatedly to meet with Congressman Moran prior to today, and he refused to do so. Access to the press conference held this morning was also restricted only to those friendly to the proposed legislation. A representative of Feld Entertainment who wanted to attend was physically ejected from the room and had the press packet provided confiscated from him. Another party was denied access to the room altogether.

"Our repeated efforts to meet with Representative Moran were ignored, which is particularly unfortunate given that our corporate headquarters is located in his Congressional District. He preferred to serve entities that are not within his jurisdiction and even foreign to this country rather than listen to the people he was elected to represent in his own District." said Tom Albert, Vice President of Government Relations for Feld Entertainment, *Ringling Bros.* parent company. "Indeed, this bill will do nothing to improve the care of any animal and represents an attempt to outlaw protected artistic expression of a centuries-old art form. Our company lawfully operates and provides quality family entertainment throughout the United States. It is one of the few live shows left that a family can attend for the same price as the cost of the movies."

The bill's underlying false premise regarding the transport and care of circus animals is directly contradicted by sound science and animal husbandry best practices. Moreover, the public safety record of *Ringling Bros.* is exemplary and stands in stark contrast to the recent events that occurred at the unlicensed fixed facility in Ohio – which would not be governed or affected by this bill.

Multiple layers of federal, state and local laws and regulations are already in place that govern the welfare of animals. We believe Congressman Moran should stop misleading the American public by supporting animal rights groups who are not knowledgeable about caring for animals and do not reveal their hidden agenda to the public. This is not unlike the manufactured litigation brought by a plaintiff-for-hire and his animal rights benefactors that Feld Entertainment won at trial and on appeal.

For more information on Feld Entertainment's most recent legal victory, visit www.ringlingbrostrialinfo.com