



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

September 14, 2015

Hon. Thomas Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

I write you on behalf of many constituents who have contacted me expressing concern for the health and treatment of an elderly female elephant by the name of Nosey. As you know, Nosey is a female African elephant, who is used to give rides to the public even though she appears to be in great pain and is reportedly suffering from crippling arthritis and degenerative joint disease.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has previously investigated claims of abuse by Nosey's owner, Hugo Liebel, which resulted in numerous citations for violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act. While a 2014 veterinarian visit, cleared Nosey for all "work", the Humane Society of the United States recently pointed out that the veterinarians who saw Nosey, concluded that if the elephant "shows any signs of obvious discomfort or reluctance to ambulate normally, further evaluation would be recommended and exhibition riding should be limited." At this point, there are many legitimate questions being raised about Nosey's health, and I am disappointed that the USDA has not intervened. I am asking you to use every option available to you to ensure that she is properly protected.

Our nation's treatment of animals is a priority of mine and I am grateful to those constituents who have advocated so strongly on behalf of Nosey. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any updates on Nosey so that I may share them with those constituents who have inquired about her. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom MacArthur".

Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress