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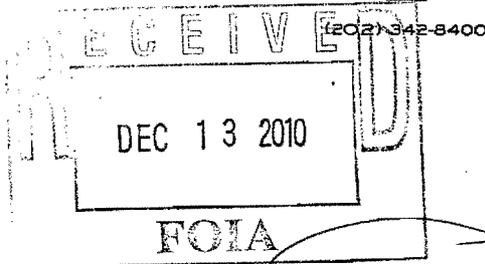
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December 13, 2010

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VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL AND E-MAIL

Tonya Woods, FOIA Director
Legislative and Public Affairs
Freedom of Information Act
United States Department of Agriculture
4700 River Road, Unit 50
Riverdale, MD 20737
E-mail: foia.officer@aphis.usda.gov

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear Ms. Woods:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552 et seq., and the Department of Agriculture's ("USDA") FOIA Reference Guide, I am hereby requesting all records¹ of communications created, sent, or received by Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service ("APHIS") personnel, including, but not limited to, Dr. Chester A. Gipson, Dr. Denise Sofranko, Dr. Tracy Thompson, and Dr. Tami Howard, regarding inspection during November 2010 of USDA licensed Class C captive elephant exhibitors in the city of Chicago. This request specifically includes, but is not limited to:

1. All records of communications between APHIS personnel and the following individuals: Mary Ann Smith (Alderman, Chicago Ward 48) and/or Ward 48 or city council staff members, Cherie Travis (Executive Director, Chicago Animal Care and Control), Mark Rosenthal (former Operations Manager, Commission on Animal Care and Control), any other employee of the Commission on Animal Care and Control; Sandra Brode, Chicago Police Department; and

¹ For purposes of this request, the term "records" refers to, but is not limited to correspondence of any kind, memoranda, letters, notes, schedules, electronic mail, telephone logs, meeting minutes, work papers, reports, studies or data.

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2. All records of communications between APHIS personnel and the following individuals: Margaret Whittaker (Active Environments) and Debbie Leahy (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

Further, I am requesting records related to travel to Chicago, Illinois during October and November 2010 by APHIS personnel, including Dr. Sofranko, Dr. Thompson, and Dr. Howard.

To the extent any requested records are exempted from release, please provide us with all non-exempt portions of any exempt records with an explanation of any redactions.

As the requestor, I agree to pay all reasonable fees and costs necessary to fulfill this request, provided that said fees and costs do not exceed \$50.00. In the event that fees and costs exceed this limit, please notify me expeditiously of the estimated cost before proceeding.

Please send all available records to my attention at the contact information provided above. I look forward to receiving any reply within the 20-day time period required by law. If you have any questions or otherwise need to discuss this request, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael McGinn
Government Relations Analyst