



IAAPA

International
Association of
Amusement Parks
and Attractions

Headquarters

1448 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314, USA
Phone: +1 703/836-4800
Fax: +1 703/836-6742
Email: iaapa@iaapa.org
www.IAAPA.org

IAAPA Europe

Square de Meeus 38/40
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 2-401-6161
Fax: +32 2-401-6868
Email: europe@IAAPA.org

IAAPA Latin America

Ave. Presidente Masaryk 111,
Piso 1
Col. Chapultepec Morales
Mexico, D.F. 11560
Phone: +52 55-3300-5915
Fax: +52 55-3300-5999
Email: latinoamerica@IAAPA.org

2010 EVENTS

Asian Attractions Expo

July 13-16
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Euro Attractions Show

October 6-8
Rome, Italy

IAAPA Attractions Expo

November 15-19
Orlando, Florida, USA

April 27, 2010

The Honorable Madeleine Bordallo
Chairwoman
House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs,
Oceans and Wildlife
1337 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Brown
Ranking Member
House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs,
Oceans and Wildlife
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Bordallo and Ranking Member Brown:

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) welcomes the Subcommittee's interest in the education and conservation programs of America's zoos and aquariums. We would like to submit this letter for the record of the hearing held on April 27, 2010.

The Attractions Industry in the United States

Founded more than 90 years ago, IAAPA is the world's largest international trade association for permanently situated amusement facilities and attractions. IAAPA represents more than 4,100 facility, supplier, and individual members from more than 90 countries. Member facilities include zoos, aquariums, amusement/theme parks, waterparks, attractions, family entertainment centers, arcades, museums, science centers, resorts, and casinos.

Safety is the number one priority for the attractions industry. IAAPA promotes the development of safety standards worldwide, working with ASTM International and other standards-setting groups to develop and update industry safety and maintenance requirements.

The attractions industry is a vital part of the U.S. economy. There are more than 400 amusement parks and attractions in the United States, providing jobs for approximately 500,000 full-time and seasonal employees.

It is estimated that domestic and international travelers spend \$47.8 billion annually visiting amusement parks and attractions. This generates approximately \$8 billion in payroll and tax revenue. Moreover, these travelers spend an additional \$65.5 billion in indirect expenditures such as transportation, food, lodging and other entertainment.

Zoos and aquariums constitute an important part of IAAPA's membership. A total of 65 U.S. zoos and aquariums are members of the association, 19 of which are aquariums. At the IAAPA Attractions Expo, the largest annual

gathering of the attractions industry in the world, our educational opportunities include a full day of seminars specifically for zoo and aquarium professionals, in addition to a week-long education conference for the entire attractions industry.

Zoo and Aquarium Industry's Commitment to Education

Accredited zoos and aquariums host more than 180 million people each year. Our zoo and aquarium members are committed to educating the public about the animals in their care. Due to the large number of members of the public who visit their facilities, they are able to provide this education and dedication to conservation to a very wide audience.

Shows and displays at zoos and aquariums are often exciting to both children and adults and make learning about the animals considerably easier and more appealing than traditional options. The sensory-based education programs provided at zoos and aquariums are ideal for non-traditional learners and those with special needs. Zoos and aquariums provide safe, affordable opportunities for children to be outdoors, enjoying nature and spending quality time with their families. Even if he only sees one show (which are usually offered several times a day), there is no doubt a child will remember at least some of the information he hears about marine mammals and other wildlife.

In addition to the informal education experience of visiting a zoo or aquarium, IAAPA zoo and aquarium members offer formal, structured educational programs. At a time when school budgets are being cut across the country, zoos and aquariums provide a valuable supplement to science education. Zoos and aquariums regularly partner with schools, camps and community organizations to provide curriculum-based education and host field trips, sleepovers, after-school programs, science camps and other programming. Many facilities also have education resources for teachers such as downloadable, school board-approved curriculum sets on biology, geography and conservation.

Many children in the U.S. do not have the opportunity to visit zoos or aquariums because of distance, cost or other factors. A 2009 National Research Council report found "abundant evidence that [accredited zoos and aquariums] contribute to people's knowledge and interest in science" and that they can "significantly improve outcomes for individuals from groups that are historically underrepresented in science." To serve outlying areas and disadvantaged youth, zoos and aquariums conduct outreach, e-learning programs and scholarships to residential summer camps which provide students with experiences they would not have otherwise.

Moreover, zoos and aquariums in the United States provide research opportunities for students of all ages. Whether it's looking up information about an animal on a website or hosting doctoral students to study the vocal communication patterns of dolphins, zoos and aquariums provide valuable reference materials.

Conservation Efforts

Accredited zoos and aquariums are unmatched in enabling families to connect with wildlife, learn about nature and become involved in protecting the ocean and other wildlife habitats for the future. Research has shown that when people experience wildlife in person and hear about the threats to those animals, they feel a strong connection and are motivated to take action.

Zoos and aquariums have both the capacity and responsibility to increase public awareness of environmental issues and to implement conservation action programs—a responsibility they take very seriously. IAAPA zoo and aquarium members have recently partnered with a long list of both governmental and non-profit organizations on a wide variety of environmental and conservation projects both in the U.S. and around the world.

Economic Benefits of Zoos & Aquariums in the U.S.

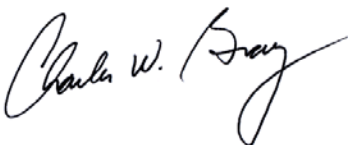
In addition to their educational value, zoos and aquariums provide significant economic benefit to the communities and states in which they are located. The National Research Council report contains considerable data on the economic impact of zoos and aquariums. Its summary includes the following findings on this important benefit of these facilities:

“The annual outlays of zoos and aquariums for operations and capital improvements have been found to generate a significant return to the U.S. economy in terms of their contribution to Gross Domestic Product (\$2.90 for each \$1 of direct spending), new personal earnings (\$0.92 for each \$1.00 of direct spending) and job growth (28.4 jobs per \$1,000,000 in new direct spending). The \$3.26 billion in total direct outlays by AZA’s member zoos and aquariums generated \$9.258 billion in total economic impact with \$8.4 billion of these benefits being captured by the US economy.

“This direct spending of \$3.26 billion also generated \$2.9 billion in new personal earnings with \$2.65 billion accruing to workers residing in the U.S. In addition to the 49,485 full and part-time employees of the zoos and aquariums, their annual outlays and their indirect and induced effects supported a total of 90,192 jobs in 2008, a gain of 7,860 jobs from 2007 with 98.5 percent of these new jobs located in the U.S. Besides their undisputed educational value, zoos and aquariums are a major source of economic activity within the national economy and were a significant source of personal income and employment growth during the height of the Great Recession.”

The zoo and aquarium industry in the U.S. is a meaningful resource in education, environmental and economic efforts. The industry’s institutions, suppliers, patrons and employees look forward to continuing to broaden and deepen all Americans’ understanding of the world around us. We thank you for this opportunity to participate in the Subcommittee’s hearing.

Sincerely,



Charles W. Bray
President & CEO
IAAPA