NSA Resolution 2016-04

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS
THE BIG CAT PUBLIC SAFETY ACT

WHEREAS, the nation's sheriffs, the highest constitutional law enforcement officers in many counties throughout the nation, should not be confronted with dangerous big cats kept in unsafe and abusive circumstances as domestic pets in the United States; and

WHEREAS, tigers, lions and other exotic "Big Cats" who are kept in people's homes and backyards as domestic pets pose a serious and completely unnecessary risk to public safety, law enforcement and first responders; and

WHEREAS, Sheriffs/Deputy Sheriffs should not be exposed to response to extremely high risk incidents when private owners are not able to control and manage their dangerous big cats. Many of these big cats are frequently housed in dilapidated cages that are unlikely to hold and contain them during natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes and tornadoes; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 big cats are owned as pets or maintained in ill-equipped roadside zoos and traveling exhibits in the United States. Since 1990, there have been over 740 dangerous incidents in America involving big cats – tigers, lions, cougars in which 5 children and 16 adults have been killed and scores of people have been mauled.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Sheriffs' Association recognizes that the private ownership of big cats in America is a serious public safety problem which requires the passage of the "Big Cat Public Safety Act" to ensure big cats only live in secure facilities that can properly provide for them and do not diminish public safety.

Approved by the Board of Directors of the National Sheriffs' Association who have now Amended & Restated NSA Resolution 2016-04, on June 25, 2016 at the Annual Conference of the National Sheriffs' Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota. This resolution to remain in effect until June 26, 2020, in accordance with Article XIII, Section 6 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Sheriffs Association.