



**2026 – 02**

**NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION OPPOSES H.R. 7159, PROTECTING LOCAL ZOOS ACT OF 2026**

**WHEREAS**, the nation's sheriffs, the highest constitutional law enforcement officers in many counties throughout the United States, should not be placed in situations involving lions, tigers, and other dangerous big cats kept in unsafe or abusive circumstances as domestic pets in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Sheriffs' Association endorsed the Big Cat Public Safety Act, a law enacted in 2022 that prevents big cats from being kept in private homes and backyards as domestic pets and curbs the rampant breeding that fueled the pet trade; and

**WHEREAS**, the Big Cat Public Safety Act has proven effective in deterring demand for big cats as pets and ending the extensive breeding that funneled cats into the pet trade, resulting in far fewer calls for service and law enforcement interventions related to dangerous big cat incidents; and

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 7159 would create significant loopholes in the Big Cat Public Safety Act, allowing exotic animal dealers to buy, breed, and sell big cats as pets and weakening existing safeguards, which would facilitate the reintroduction of these dangerous animals into communities across the country; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the National Sheriffs' Association recognizes that the Big Cat Public Safety Act must be maintained in its current form to protect public safety and law enforcement officers, and that the Association formally opposes the passage of H.R. 7159.