



PETER STROUD SERVICES
Design & Nature

City of Toronto Councillors

10 November 2011

Dear Councillors,

As a zoological consultant specialising in captive elephant welfare I applaud your recent decision to move the elephants at the Metro Toronto Zoo to the Performing Animals Welfare Society in California.

News reports are now appearing suggesting that zookeepers are opposed to moving the elephants to PAWS and are seeking to have you reverse your decision. It is argued, essentially, that the elephant keepers know best what the elephants require.

As a former zookeeper, Curator and Director with long experience working with and supervising zookeepers, including elephant keepers, I urge you not to be persuaded by these arguments.

The needs of elephants are broad and complex and must be determined by careful objective assessment. Zookeepers necessarily have a view of their animals, based on their experience within the physical and operational boundaries that their institution has set over many years. Their view is often coloured by issues of tradition and status. That they rightly feel a powerful sense of responsibility is not in doubt. That they are in a position to always know what is right and best for their animals, is patently untrue.

Zookeepers have a point of view, but it is just one point view. They will have developed powerful emotional attachments to the elephants. They could and should assist the move to PAWS, if they can take an appropriately positive attitude. That they should seek to prevent this move is simply wrong-headed.

Council has made the right decision to move these elephants to PAWS where their needs will be met to the highest standards standards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter C. Stroud', written in a cursive style.

Peter C. Stroud