



The Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition

Release: **IMMEDIATE**

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Date: December 16, 2003

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Tiger Kills Boy

Coalition Calls on North Carolina Legislature to Take Action

SAN FRANCISCO, CA -- He's dead - a ten year old boy mauled to death by a tiger in an accident that *should never have happened*. The tragedy occurred as a result of the unregulated private ownership of dangerous wild animals. The boy was mauled by his aunts' 400-pound 'pet' Bengal tiger yesterday in North Carolina.

Legislators in the State of North Carolina, from the Governor down, should hang their heads in shame and assume responsibility for this tragic incident as the State has no legislation in place restricting the private ownership of dangerous wild animals. Since the USDA does not regulate pets, there is literally no oversight to assess and guarantee the safety, suitability or competence of owners who keep or intend keeping dangerous animals as pets. Nor is there any meaningful welfare regulation to ensure the health of the animal concerned.

The Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition, (CWAPC), a coalition of 20 leading Animal Protection Organizations, representing more than 10 million constituents, urges the leadership of the state of North Carolina to pass appropriate legislation to ban the private ownership of dangerous wild animals.

Wayne Pacelle, Senior Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, a CWAPC member organization stated, " This senseless tragedy makes the indisputable case that North Carolina needs a ban on keeping dangerous wild animals as pets."

Dr. Kim Haddad, Manager of CWAPC and a veterinarian, added: "As an experienced animal care professional, I know how dangerous and unsuitable these animals are as pets. As a mother I can't begin to imagine the horror, misery and anguish that the child's relatives are suffering. For God's sake let's make sure no other family is put through this and take action now."

On a related subject, the Captive Wildlife Safety Act (S. 256, H.R.1006) has recently passed both the House and Senate and is awaiting signature. This Bill will prevent the interstate transport of large cats for purposes of the pet trade. This is an important first step, but to prevent tragedies such as this from occurring again and again, there must be a ban on the private ownership of dangerous animals in all states. Currently, only 12 states have complete bans and 7 have partial bans, leaving millions of citizens vulnerable to tragedies of this kind.

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