



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy Doesn't Forget: Presents PACE Students with Signed Elephant Protection Bill

TERRENCE MURPHY December 14, 2017

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Pace Students Worked Closely With Murphy and Paulin to Protect Performing Elephants

Pleasantville, NY - When a group of students from Pace University met with Senator Terrence Murphy in Albany in 2016, he promised them that when the legislation they were proposing passed he would bring them a copy signed by Governor Andrew Cuomo to display at their school. On December 13, Senator Murphy fulfilled his promise, presenting the students and the faculty at Pace's Dyson College of Arts and Sciences Environmental Policy

Clinic with a signed bill for the Elephant Protection Act.

The Elephant Protection Act was inspired by the students at Pace University's Dyson College of Arts & Sciences Environmental Policy Clinic, who recognized the injustice being perpetrated against circus elephants and vowed to act. Working in conjunction with Senator Murphy, Assemblywoman Paulin, and Pace faculty members John Cronin and Michelle Land, the students crafted the Elephant Protection Act. Governor Cuomo signed the bill into law on October 19, 2017.

"Elephants are often tortured by trainers who use extreme measures to get them to perform, often hooking or stabbing at them," said Senator Murphy. "The Greatest Show on Earth - Ringling Brothers - did not treat their elephants properly. These students took on the monumental task of ending the mistreatment of performing elephants. I am proud to be able to present them with this bill. Pace students will always be able to look this and know they made a difference."

"Elephants have been exploited and abused in entertainment acts for too long," Assemblywoman Amy Paulin said. "Confinement, torture and unhealthy living conditions have led to early death for these intelligent, gentle animals. This law has helped New York become the leader in ending this horrible practice. Elephants will no longer be subjected to cruel treatment for our amusement."

John Cronin, Senior Fellow, Dyson College Institute for Sustainability and the Environment, said, "This law will have a national and global impact. We have set a new precedent. This will help teach future generations that elephants aren't clowns, that they're not meant to be tortured for our amusement, and that they're wild animals that deserve to be free."

"We have ended the barbaric practice of using elephants to entertain humans in New York State, it is time for other states to follow suit," said Michelle Land, clinical professor of environmental law and policy at Pace. "The cruel practices and false values that circuses and similar venues promote in the U.S. only contribute to the dire condition of elephant populations globally. They are the antiquated relics of a bygone era."

Pavan Naidu, a second-year graduate school student, worked on the project from the beginning. Proudly displaying the signed copy of the bill, he said, "This is like holding up a Super Bowl trophy!"

"This is the culmination of a lot of hard work," Pavan continued. "Working on the Elephant Protection Act, we learned how to write a piece of legislation, how to be advocates for our bill, and most importantly, how to work together as a team. It's rewarding to know we've made a difference in the world."

Nicole Virgona, who is working on her Masters of Environmental Policy, commented, "Professor Cronin and Professor Land gave us assistance and direction, and made us feel proud of the work we did. The legislators in Albany, especially Senator Murphy and Assemblywoman Paulin, treated us like peers and were very positive as we navigated through the legislative process."