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Senate of Pennsylvania

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JAN 25 2011

TO: All Senators
FROM: Senator Richard Alloway, II *Rich*
RE: Introduction of Legislation—Sale or Purchase of American Alligator and/or Venomous Snakes
DATE: January 25, 2011

In the near future, I plan on introducing legislation amending Title 30 (Fish) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further providing for the sale or purchase of American Alligators and/or venomous snakes.

Specifically, this legislation provides that no person shall purchase or sell an American Alligator or venomous snake not native to or generally found within this Commonwealth. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to a public zoological garden receiving government grants or appropriations, or a private zoological park or garden that is open to the public and accredited by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums.

Alligators typically grow one foot per year for the first five years, and may continue to grow to lengths beyond 12 feet, reaching as much as 1,000 pounds. While alligator hatchlings can be purchased or sold for \$50 to \$100, they can quickly become too big to care for and investing in the proper indoor setup for this aquatic reptile can be an extremely costly endeavor. Once captive, these reptiles cannot be released into the wild and Zoos and other institutions capable of housing an alligator cannot take surplus animals from the pet market. Consequently, it is necessary to stop the unregulated sale of alligators in Pennsylvania, for reasons which include human health and safety and as a prevention of cruelty to animals.

Alligators are regulated in many states including New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Arizona, Delaware, and Florida.

Many states and a growing number of cities and counties have laws regulating the possession and sale of venomous reptiles. Venomous snakes include coral snakes, kraits, mambas, sea snakes, sea kraits, Australian elapids, true vipers, pit vipers, rattlesnakes, boomslangs, tree snakes, vine snakes and mangroves. States which have laws relating to venomous snakes include, but are not limited to, Arizona, California, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey and New York.

If you are interested in joining me as a co-sponsor of this legislation, please contact Melissa Knepper at mknepper@pasen.gov or by phone at 787-4651.