



September 13th, 2023

Dear Brennan's,

As an international animal protection organization with thousands of Los Angeles-area supporters, we are reaching out regarding your turtle races. As stated by turtle experts below, this activity is inhumane and we would like to help you find an alternative to it. We invite you to have a dialogue with us about the races and brainstorm alternative activities that would end your bar's troublesome use of live animals for entertainment.

Your website states that it's the real sport of kings; however animal exploitation is nothing to boast about. You refer to the turtle races as a tradition; however there are traditions that are outdated and in need of change, especially if they are harmful to innocent animals. Turtles belong in quiet, peaceful, and natural environments, not forced to entertain humans for cheap thrills. They do not deserve to be used as racing tools.

The following statements are from turtle experts:

1. Nick Geist, a professor of Biology and turtle biologist at Sonoma State University, condemned the atmosphere he observed in recent videos of turtle races at Brennan's bar in Marina del Rey as "inhumane."

I am struck by the enormous amount of stress the turtles subjected to this treatment are obviously undergoing. The Brennan's bar atmosphere, with turtles surrounded by loud boisterous people, bright lights, and announcers screaming through a microphone is inhumane and far out of line in how animals should be treated. The turtles would interpret being surrounded by agitated (often drunk) humans as lethal threats, evoking a flood of stress hormones (e.g., adrenaline, cortisol). This sort of stress response has well documented deleterious effects on the immune system, growth, and reproductive function, among other negative effects on the animals' biology. Notably, many species of turtles across the globe are under severe threat of extinction and it is incumbent on humans to do what we can to try to reverse this alarming trend. I strongly support efforts to end this distasteful activity.

2. Kim Titterington, Wildlife rehabilitator and lead researcher on the RRRCORR project. (Rescue Rehabilitation Research Conservation Of Reptiles Amphibians) states:

Turtle races can increase stress levels leading to harmful effects. Reptiles are often seen as non-feeling creatures that can tolerate almost anything. Although they can handle extreme circumstances, it comes at a cost. High levels of stress affect the immune system. Stress leads to a decrease in appetite and the ability to absorb nutrients during

digestion. Because of their slow metabolism, turtles don't show symptoms until the issue is advanced, which very well may be irreversible by the time it's noticeable. Avoiding unnecessary stress will help prevent these problems along with proper husbandry and care throughout the life of the animal.

We also consulted a reptile specialist veterinarian, Dr. Walter Merker, of Orange Grove Animal Hospital in Arizona, who has extensive experience treating turtles. He strongly concurred that subjecting turtles to racing is stressful and damaging to their systems.

California leads the way in regards to animal welfare, and we hope you will consider modernizing your activities to reflect the times. It would give Brennan's the opportunity to demonstrate compassion for animals and be a leader in positive change. In Defense of Animals and thousands of people would support your compassionate efforts, which would in turn draw attention to your establishment in a beneficial way.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please reach out via email or phone as listed below to schedule a discussion. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

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In Defense of Animals

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