Editorial: Orcas would pay the price if SeaWorld show banned

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It would be a shame if there were no more Shamu shows – and not just for humans.

If the animal advocacy groups supporting proposed legislation to ban orcas in captivity have their way, orca shows at SeaWorld would be shut down permanently. But don't believe that it will be a "Free Willy" ending; a ban could do real harm to the very animals it seeks to protect.

Assembly Bill 2140 by Assemblyman Richard Bloom, D-Santa Monica, would amend the California Fish and Game Code to prohibit orcas from being used for entertainment purposes and from breeding in captivity. Only one place in California has orca shows and breeds them – SeaWorld in San Diego.

This is bad legislation for a number or reasons, beginning with the fact that the state Legislature isn't the body that ought to be deciding if marine mammals should be held in captivity.

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