

Dear [Senator/Representative] [LAST NAME]

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent regarding the relocation and release of Lolita the Killer Whale, currently residing at the Miami Seaquarium, as proposed by The Dolphin Company and Friends of Lolita. I am writing to urge your support in opposing this proposal as it is contrary to Lolita's best interests given her age and health, and it further puts at risk the endangered killer whale pods that reside in the Salish Sea.

Lolita (known as Tokitae to her trainers) is a killer whale that has resided at the Miami Seaquarium since 1970 after being caught in Puget Sound. The Dolphin Company, who own the Miami Seaquarium, announced that they will work with the activist group, Friends of Lolita, to relocate and release this geriatric whale into the Salish Sea in Washington State. The announcement does not address the numerous issues associated with releasing a marine mammal that has been under human care for over 50 years, including the numerous federal regulatory hurdles under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. Numerous zoological and professional organizations are also questioning the announcement's lack of feasibility, scientific-based assessments, and numerous regulatory approvals. Even the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) previously stated that any proposed release of Toki would require "rigorous scientific review" for "a whale which has spent most of its life in captivity raises many concerns that would need to be carefully addressed."

Unfortunately, Toki's advanced age and on-going health conditions make her a poor candidate for life in the wild or even a sea pen. Toki has lived in her current pool at Miami Seaquarium for the last 53 years. She's had access to routine and urgent medical care, restaurant-quality food, and an unchanging environment. Moving her is highly risky due to the enormous stress it will put on her, both physically and mentally. At her age and declining health condition, it's highly likely that any type of major relocation would kill her. For the last 53 years, Toki has lived in a carefully managed environment with consistent temperature and water quality. In a sea pen, Toki will immediately be exposed to pollutants and pathogens for which she has no immunity, while in an already compromised health state. Furthermore, the local Southern Resident killer whales, protected under the Endangered Species Act, will also be at risk as Toki's presence in their waters exposes them to potentially deadly pathogens for which they have no immunity.

While Toki should have never been captured decades ago, I urge you to oppose the proposed plan for her relocation and release. Please instead support efforts by Truth 4 Toki that advocate for Toki's general health and well-being while minimizing risks to both her and the endangered Southern Resident pod. Tokitae has spent the last 50 years entertaining crowds at the Miami Seaquarium; she deserves to spend her retirement in peace.

Sincerely  
[YOUR NAME]