

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify against the proposed ban Senate Bill 832.

My name is Melanie Calandra I am a Managing Director at the International Fur Federation (IFF).

Many of you have been given a great amount of misinformation. I know that those who would support this legislation would be doing so with good intentions, but you are being deceived; this draft legislation is riddled with vicious claims about the fur trade that are simply false. The fur trade in North America is a small-scale, family-run, artisanal industry.

Fur provides vital income for remote indigenous communities who are limited in their options for creating income.

Fur Farming has strict animal welfare standards with third party audits. Their code of practice was prepared by veterinarians, animal welfare researchers, producers, and other experts. Herd health, Euthanasia, Animal Husbandry, Pen design/Size, Nutrition are outlined in code and euthanasia is done on-farm humanely.

Fur Farming is sustainable. Everything is used. You might be surprised to know that Fur Farming takes over 50,000 tons of food waste a year, diverting it from land fill. Manure is used for fertilizer, mink oil is used as bio-diesel, everything is used.

In previous testimony animal extremists have tried to claim that fur farms "threaten public health" because mink can be susceptible to COVID-19. In fact, with proper bio-security -- and quarantine, when necessary -- Dr. Anthony Fauci and the CDC have stated that they do not consider mink farms to be a public health risk.

Fur Farmers deserve your support.

Your bill talks about alternatives to fur most of which are petroleum-based synthetics; these cause more harm to nature! Fur biodegrades at the rate of a Willow Leaf. In fact, eco systems depend on the fur trade.

Wild sourced fur is well regulated at the regional, state, federal levels and with two ISO standards and international agreements on humane trapping. Trapping will exist even with a fur ban because we need to Protect and monitor endangered species.

Trapping also helps with

- Reintroduction of species into their original habitats, like the American River Otter for example.
- Public Safety
- Prevention of Property Damage
- and much more

The United States currently has the best wildlife management model in the world as a result.

The fact remains, if you ban fur, it doesn't protect ANY animals. It makes matters worse for them and for their ecosystems.

In closing, I strongly ask you to reconsider this ban.