

Dear Senator Golden and Committee Members:

Animals farmed for their fur are forced to live their entire lives in small, filthy, wire cages, denied their natural behaviors and movements. Such extreme confinement and deprivation cause both psychological and physical stress, and despite industry claims that slaughter is quick, evidence demonstrates that the animals face a cruel and inhumane death: Mink are killed by anal and oral electrocution, neck breakage, and suffocation; they may be skinned alive while they are still conscious. The vast majority of people no longer wear fur; it is completely unnecessary in our modern world.

In addition, fur farms lead to land degradation due to waste runoff that seeps into soil and waterways, causing hazardous damage to local ecosystems.

Finally, studies show that viral infections in mink are a risk to human health and vice versa. Especially when minks' immune systems are damaged by stress, they can easily give rise to new virus mutations. Variant viruses that developed in mink in Denmark and the Netherlands were directly transmitted to humans; it is possible that such variants could be vaccine-resistant. Outbreaks have been documented on hundreds of fur farms in Europe and the US, including at least one in Oregon, which began when a human transmitted the coronavirus to a mink. Equally troubling is that a mink that escapes from a fur farm could potentially spread the virus to other wildlife, leading to widespread outbreaks among wild ones.

It makes perfect sense that we drastically limit human contact with wildlife, and this bill would help. Please support SB 832. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Eileen Stark