

Dear Chair Golden and Committee members:

As a longtime Oregonian, scientist and climate justice advocate, I hereby submit the following comments in strong support for SB 832, the bill to end mink farming in Oregon and urge you to pass this bill this session:

•Given that we are still in the midst of a race against a global pandemic that has taken the lives of over 2000 Oregonians, and nearly 3 million around the world, not to mention wreaked havoc on our economy with its resulting economic injustice; and given that scientists have already determined that the spread of SARS-CoV-2 in mink farms poses a serious risk of spillover to native wildlife and humans with the distinct risk of leading to further variants that threaten to undermine vaccination efforts, it is simply unconscionable for the Oregon legislature to continue allowing this industry to pose such a public health risk.

•Given that we are in the midst of a climate crisis that has already caused numerous Oregonians to lose their homes and all their belongings to increasing wildfires, not to mention the numerous other significant harmful health and economic consequences, and given that the science is clear that the fur industry presents both significant climate as well as other environmental costs (at a time when we have many far more climate- and environmentally-friendly textiles readily available), this wholly outdated and unnecessary industry has no place in a state that aspires to take serious action on climate and live up to its environmental ideals.

•Additionally, it is important to also note that fur is one of the most cruel industries. Numerous investigations have revealed nightmarish fur industry standard practices, with animals who are meant to live in the wild, instead pacing back and forth in tiny cramped filthy cages only to be met with brutal, abrupt slaughter, often by electrocution (to their anus or genitals), suffocation, broken necks, or worse. It is high time we follow the lead of other nations and the state of California in putting an end to this destructive and cruel industry.

Thank you for your consideration,

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