

My HB 3390 FF Oregon Letter & Testimony

I'm an Oregon resident and I am urging you to support House Bill 3390 which would ban the sale of new fur products in Oregon.

Most Oregon residents agree that the forceful breeding, confinement, and slaughter of fur-bearing animals for a luxury item and vanity piece is antiquated, cruel, and unnecessary and has no place in a modern and ethical society, especially in a forward-thinking state such as Oregon.

Fur farms, known for their cruel treatment of animals, as well as for their profit-driven killing methods, comprise 85% of the fur produced globally, causing significant environmental damage and dumping millions of pounds of waste every year, polluting the earth. And the proliferation of these farms only increases the demand for fur. Ironically, most fur products sold in the U.S. come from factory fur farms in China where there are no legal protections for animals raised for fur.

There is a frightening trend of fur retailers using terms such as, "ethically sourced" and "sustainable", to appeal to our innate compassion for animals. And also to likely assuage the guilt that often accompanies donning a garment that most people know caused unspeakable suffering just for a fashion statement. It's called, "humane-washing" and "green-washing." And unless we go out of our way to educate ourselves and each other, we are easily convinced that there is an ethical way to "source" fur. There is not.

The fur industry contributes to water pollution through the discharge of nitrogen and phosphorus in feces. According to a Michigan State University study, the US mink industry alone adds almost 1,000 tons each year. Additionally, fur is processed with carcinogenic chemicals, including chromium and formaldehyde.

Faux fur can be made with used or biodegradable materials, and is constantly being innovated and improved. Now, more than ever, technology and science afford us the ability to make more humane clothing choices.

Lastly, the fur industry poses a major public health risk. Fur farms have exacerbated the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viral infections, as mink are particularly susceptible to contracting and spreading the disease. Outbreaks have occurred on 300 fur farms across 10 countries, including one in Oregon. Millions of mink have died from the disease or were culled to prevent its spread. Mutated strains have been transmitted

back to humans, endangering the efficacy of a vaccine. The disease was also spread to a wild mink outside a farm in Utah.

The fur industry has been relentless in its attempt to make a comeback and it's up to all of us to do everything we can to prevent, not enable, this deplorable and shameful resurgence.

Banning the sale of new fur products would establish Oregon as a leader in the humane treatment of non-human animals and in moving the country forward toward more environmentally sound alternatives.

Thank you,
Dani Rukin