

PERSONNEL & ANIMAL WELFARE

MOTION

More than fifty million animals including foxes, chinchilla, minks, raccoon, dogs and rabbits are killed for their fur every year. According to the World Society for the Protection of Animals, eighty-five percent of these animals are raised and killed on factory fur farms. The fur industry is one that has consistently been associated with inhumane practices. Animals who are cultivated solely for their fur spend their lives in cramped cages and are subject to deplorable living conditions. These animals are then killed in inhumane ways to preserve the quality of the pelt above all else. Common practices include gassing, electrocution, suffocation and neck breaking. Electrocuting fur-bearing animals anally and genitally is a slaughter method used frequently in the industry to limit damage to the fur. New York is the only state where this is illegal. Commonly, animals are stunned before they are skinned but some remain conscious during the process- at times still breathing after they are skinned.

The fur industry is one where "best current practice" involves the use of a system with very low welfare potential. In a signed letter to British parliament 50 veterinarians and animal experts including Jane Goodall point to the inherent welfare deficiencies in the trade, "Wild animals on fur farms live their lives in wire-floored cages thousands of times smaller than the natural territories. They are denied their biological inheritance to exhibit natural behaviors and stimuli such as hunting, digging and swimming." In the state of California, wild animals in captivity must be kept in enclosures that comply with statutory minimums. One fox would require 80 square feet and a mink, 30 square feet. These animals must also be given the opportunity to replicate their behaviors from the wild (Cal. Code Regs. §671). In fur farming, the space required for the same animals are a few square feet at best. Instances of stereotypical behavior indicating psychological distress due to these conditions are well documented, including repetitive pacing and spinning and cannibalism.

Trapping wild animals is also part of the industry. The most popular form of trapping among the top three wild fur pelt producers- the U.S., Canada and Russia- is the leghold trap. It has been declared inhumane by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the National Animal Control Association. Many countries and some states, including California, have banned the use of this trap because of the cruelty it inflicts on animals (Cal. Fish & Game Code 4004). Los Angeles previously banned its use more than 25 years ago.

Fur is also damaging to the environment and contributes to water and air pollution. According to a study by Michigan State University, the U.S. mink industry alone adds almost 1,000 tons of nitrogen and phosphorus to the environment each year. Fur is also heavily processed with harmful carcinogenic chemicals, including chromium and formaldehyde, which can be damaging to human health and also make fur difficult to biodegrade. The amount of energy required to make a coat from real fur is over fifteen times that needed to produce fake fur.

Fur farming has been banned and restrictions have been placed on the trade and sale of fur in a number of countries. Several countries around the world have banned some or all fur farming, including the UK, Denmark, and the Netherlands, one of the world's biggest mink suppliers. Israel and the UK are currently considering import/sale bans and New Zealand and India currently have import bans in place. In the state of California, West Hollywood banned the sale of fur in 2013, Berkeley in 2017 and most recently, San Francisco in 2018. Also, whether due to the cruelty inherent in the industry, its negative environmental impact, or a demand for compassionate fashion, many luxury designers have recently prohibited the use of fur in their collections. Most recently, Michael Kors, Jimmy Choo, Versace and Gucci have made commitments to remove fur from their line of products.

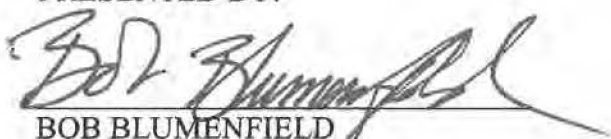
An animal killed for fur will give its life solely to become a piece of clothing, a key chain, trim on a jacket and nothing else. Today, we are a city of ethically conscious shoppers. Considering the wide


array of alternatives, any demand for fur products does not justify the unnecessary killing and the cruel treatment of fur-bearing animals. As more cities and countries pass restrictive legislation, more companies will stop using fur and alternatives will continue to improve.

In recent decades, Los Angeles has shown itself to be a world-leader city regarding animal welfare. The state legislature has also considered and passed various animal production measures including prohibiting the sale of products that are inhumane. Breeding and killing animals solely for their fur is no longer acceptable in the 21st century. By eliminating the sale of new fur products, Los Angeles has the opportunity to promote a community awareness of animal welfare and to continue to lead in the field of progressive animal welfare reform.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney be requested to prepare and present an ordinance which would prohibit the manufacture and sale of fur products, including apparel made in whole or in part of fur, or any fashion accessory, including but not limited to handbags, shoes, hats, earmuffs, jewelry, and key chains made in whole or in part of fur, with exceptions for the sale of used fur products, beginning January 1, 2020.


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