



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2021**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 969, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, RELATING TO ANIMAL FUR PRODUCTS.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 31, 2021      **TIME:** 2:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 308, Via Videoconference

**TESTIFIER(S):** Clare E. Connors, Attorney General, or  
James Paige or Bryan Yee, Deputy Attorneys General

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Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Attorney General (Department) has the following concerns related to the creation of a regulatory oversight and enforcement program within the Department.

The purposes of this bill are to add a new chapter to the Hawaii Revised Statutes to (1) prohibit the manufacture or importation for sale of certain animal fur products after June 30, 2021 and (2) prohibit the sale of certain fur products after November 30, 2021. The bill would require the Department to adopt rules, collaborate with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to develop and disseminate informational documents to educate retailers and suppliers, issue warning notices to violators, and impose administrative penalties for violations. Those regulatory requirements would entail the creation of a program within the Department.

The Department of the Attorney General is not a regulatory agency. The Department provides legal advice and otherwise represents State agencies and officials that regulate and enforce state programs. When the Department does take enforcement action, it is primarily to enforce the State's criminal laws through the prosecution of offenders. The Department has neither the expertise nor the resources to operate this type of regulatory program. At the very least, additional staffing would be needed. Regulation of the non-criminal conduct, which this bill seeks to address, is more appropriately placed within a subject matter department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

March 29, 2021

Attn: Chairwoman Sylvia Luke and Members of the Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Chris DeRose, Founder and President of Last Chance for Animals (LCA), I am writing to you on behalf of LCA and its supporters. LCA supports SB 969, to ban the sale of fur in Hawaii. LCA is an international non-profit organization based in Los Angeles that advocates for animals through legislation, investigations, education, and media outreach. LCA has an active base of members in Hawaii who support our mandate to eliminate animal exploitation.

The inherent cruelty of the fur industry has been well-documented throughout the years by animal welfare organizations such as LCA. Animals on fur farms spend their entire lives in tiny cages, subjected to horrendous cruelty and neglect - only to be killed for a piece of fashion. In 2018, LCA released a year-long undercover investigation into Millbank, a mink fur farm – the practices were so severe the farm plead guilty to failing to comply with prescribed standards of care and was ordered to pay a monetary penalty.

The environmental and public health risks the fur industry poses cannot be ignored either. Fur farming causes environmental damage in surrounding areas, including polluted lakes and watersheds. Fur farms also pose a public health risk; the spread of COVID-19 on mink farms has been well documented in countries throughout the world. To date, there have been 16 outbreaks of COVID-19 on mink fur farms in the United States, and one worker has died as a result.

LCA believes the state of Hawaii is a compassionate state that cares about the welfare of all animals. By enacting a fur sale ban, Hawaii will set a historic precedent that animal abuse will not be tolerated. Please do not hesitate to reach out for further information to assist with this matter.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris DeRose", written in a cursive style.

Chris DeRose  
Founder and President  
Last Chance for Animals  
[derose@lcanimal.org](mailto:derose@lcanimal.org)  
310-271-6096 x28

# HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

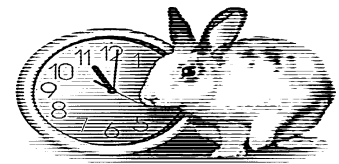
A NATIONAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

International Headquarters

148 Broadway

Richmond, CA 94804

(510) 970-7575



March 29, 2021

Dear Chairwoman Sylvia Luke and Members of the Committee,

House Rabbit Society is in strong support of SB969, the proposed legislation that would ban the manufacture and sale of fur in Hawaii.

In the US, millions of families share their homes with rabbits as companion animals – these domestic rabbits who are part of the family are the same breeds and have the same social personalities as the rabbits that are raised for meat and fur.

House Rabbit Society was founded in California and has 28 chapters and hundreds of licensed educators across the country. House Rabbit Society has been rescuing rabbits that would otherwise be euthanized in animal shelters and finding them loving homes for over 30 years. We strongly support a ban on the manufacture and sale of rabbit fur, which would save the lives of many rabbits who die for this unnecessary fashion accessory.

With House Rabbit Society members and educators in Hawaii who love their companion rabbits, we know this issue is near and dear to their hearts.

Rabbit fur is not just a byproduct of rabbit meat. Rabbits who are raised for meat are killed at a younger age than rabbits who are raised and slaughtered for fur. The fur from rabbits slaughtered for meat is used for toys and trim; the fashion industry relies on rabbits raised and killed solely for their fur. The meat from these fur rabbits is too “old” for human consumption.

In 2019, California became a more humane state with the passage of AB44, the fur sale ban. In 2021, Hawaii can become a more humane state with the passage of this fur sale ban.

On behalf of the rabbits, House Rabbit Society urges you to pass SB969.

Sincerely,

Anne Martin, PhD

Executive Director, House Rabbit Society

[anne@rabbit.org](mailto:anne@rabbit.org)

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 11:03:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stella McCartney	Stella McCartney	Support	No

Comments:

**Statement of Support of SB 969**

Dear Chair Luke and Finance committee members,

I am writing to show our support for SB 969, which prohibits the manufacture and sale of animal fur products in Hawaii.

There is a growing concern for animal welfare and the environment and major fashion companies, like us, have responded by switching to innovative materials instead of fur. The passage of SB 969 will help drive the demand for innovation leading to a more sustainable and cruelty-free future.

We are excited to support the passage of SB 969.

Yours faithfully,

Stella McCartney

Creative Director

Stella McCartney Ltd

3 Olaf Street London, W11

March 30, 2021

Hello Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Finance committee – Thank you for your time.

My name is Dr. Gail Hansen and I am speaking on behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association and our 9,000 members nationwide. I have over 25 years experience in infectious disease epidemiology, 12 years in private veterinary practices, five years as the Veterinary Senior Officer at the Pew Charitable Trusts and a former state epidemiologist and state public health veterinarian for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Today I'm speaking in support of Senate Bill 969, Hawaii's fur sales ban.

Since this pandemic began, I've been closely following the link between animals – specifically animals raised for fur – and the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans. We already knew that mink, foxes and raccoon dogs, all species farmed for their fur, were susceptible to infection with SARS-CoV-1 viruses, but now we know that SARS-CoV-2 has a particularly devastating impact on fur farmed mink.

Genetic analysis from the fur farms in the Netherlands and Denmark has shown that sick workers had introduced SARS CoV-2 to mink, the virus mutated in the mink and then that new variant was passed back to people. Given the high density of the animals and the stressful conditions they are enduring on the

farms, it appears that the virus is mutating rapidly among the mink.

There is also the possibility that the SARS-CoV-2 virus not only circulates on the farms but that the farms could also spread the virus to other species in the local environment. In fact, the virus was detected in wild mink near infected farms in Utah and Oregon. This creates the potential for a reservoir for the disease, creating a long-term risk of the virus recirculating and mutating not only in mink, but in people as well.

SARS-CoV-2 outbreaks on fur farms around the world represents a serious public health risk, and it is my expert opinion that this demonstrates the need to end the fur trade to protect the public.

Hawaii can be among the leaders on this by ending fur sales. I hope you support SB 969.

Thank you.

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 5:47:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
melanie calandra	International Fur Federation - Americas Region	Oppose	No

Comments:

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify against the proposed ban House Bill Number SB969.

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. 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.





**HUMANE SOCIETY  
VETERINARY MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION..**

March 30, 2021

Hawaii State Capitol  
House Committee on Finance  
Honolulu, HI

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**RE: VETERINARY SUPPORT for Banning Fur Sales in Hawaii (SB 969)**

Dear Chairman Luke and Members of the Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA), we are writing to express our strong support for SB 969 to ban fur sales and manufacturing in the state of Hawaii. HSVMA is an association of more than 9,000 veterinary medical professionals worldwide focused on the health and welfare of all animals, including those species raised for their fur.

As experts in the field of animal health and welfare, we recognize that there are severe animal welfare deficiencies inherent in the fur trade, including the ways in which the animals are cruelly trapped, housed, and killed. We also have serious concerns about disease transmission through susceptible fur-farmed animal populations, such as mink, fox and raccoon dogs, as well as the possibility of contagious disease spread between these animal species and humans. For these reasons, we support ending this archaic and inhumane industry and strongly endorse passage of a statewide fur sales ban in Hawaii.

**Inhumane Housing and improper Husbandry at Fur Farms**

More than 100 million animals worldwide, including foxes, chinchillas, minks, raccoon dogs and rabbits, are killed for their fur every year. The majority of these animals (around 85%) are raised in very small cage systems that fail to satisfy many of their most basic needs, particularly their need to display normal behaviors essential to their mental and physical well-being.

Investigations on fur farms worldwide--including those considered "certified" to maintain higher animal welfare standards--reveal distressing evidence of persistently poor welfare conditions. Species such as fox and mink retain their basic wild needs regardless of being bred and kept in captivity, and it is highly inaccurate for the fur industry to refer to an arctic fox bred on a fur farm as a 'domesticated' animal that has environmental and behavioral needs different from its wild relatives.

Wild animals on fur farms spend their lives in wire-floored cages thousands of times smaller than their natural territories. They are denied the opportunity to express natural behaviors such as hunting, digging and swimming. They are often kept in unnatural social groups; for example, mink are forced to live in extremely close proximity to one another which would be highly unlikely in the wild. The contrived and inhumane living conditions on fur farms inevitably lead animals to suffer severe psychological distress. Instances of unproductive repetitive behaviors, a sign of compromised psychological well-being, have been well-documented on fur farms, as have cannibalism, untreated wounds, foot deformities and eye infections.



**HUMANE SOCIETY  
VETERINARY MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION.**

**Cruel Trapping of Fur-Bearers in the Wild and Inhumane Slaughter on Fur Farms**

Other welfare deficiencies inherent in the fur industry include the trapping methods used to capture animals in the wild. Some species are targeted with crippling leg-hold traps which are not sanctioned by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) or the HSVMA. Once trapped, animals are often left to languish for long periods of time without food or water before they are killed. Meanwhile, fur factory farms crudely gas or even anally electrocute animals.

**One Health Concerns for Disease Transmission through Fur Farming**

During the current global pandemic, SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19 in humans, has spread through hundreds of fur farms in 11 countries – including the U.S. – and has resulted in government-ordered killing of nearly 20 million mink to date in order to try to stem the outbreak. Genetic analysis from some of these fur farms has shown that sick workers introduced SARS CoV-2 to mink and, at least in the Netherlands and Denmark, that mink had passed it back to fur farm workers. In addition, USDA-confirmed outbreaks on farms in Oregon, Utah, Wisconsin, and Michigan have similarly resulted in the deaths of thousands of mink.

Given the structural design of fur farms SARS-CoV-2 can not only circulate on the farms but the farms could also spread the virus to wild mink and other species in the local environment, creating the potential for a reservoir for the disease. This creates a long-term risk of the virus recirculating--not only in mink, but in people as well. Based on all these factors, mink farms present a serious public health hazard in the United States.

**Fashion Industry Turns to Fur Alternatives to Satisfy Consumer Demand**

Consumer concern for animal welfare has already led many fashion brands to stop using animal fur once and for all. These companies recognize that contemporary alternatives to fur provide luxury, warmth and style without animal cruelty. In 2018 alone, well-known brands such as Chanel, Coach, Burberry, Versace and Donna Karan joined Gucci, Michael Kors and Armani in announcing fur-free policies. Legislative bans help hasten and solidify this positive transition while driving the development of more humane alternatives to fur.

Hawaii has a progressive history regarding animal welfare measures, and we hope it will soon include banning fur sales in the Aloha State.

Sincerely,

*Ranaella K. Steinberg, DVM*

Ranaella K. Steinberg, DVM  
HSVMA Hawaii State Representative

*Eric Jayne, DVM*

Eric Jayne, DVM  
HSVMA Hawaii State Representative



Animal Defenders International

6100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1150, LOS ANGELES, CA 90048. Tel: +1 323 935 2234 Fax: +1 323 935 9234  
www.adiusa.org usa@ad-international.org

**In support of Hawaii SB969 SD2 HD1 / HB32 HD1  
to ban the manufacture, import, sale, display, trade, or distribution of fur products**

[Animal Defenders International](#) (ADI)<sup>1</sup> offers the following in strong support of [SB969 SD2 HD1 / HB32 HD1](#), to prohibit the manufacture, import, sale, display for sale, trade or distribution of fur products in the state, with our thanks to the numerous introducing sponsors (Senators Keohokalole, Gabbard, Kidani, Lee, San Buenaventura, Fevella, Moriwaki, Shimabukuro, and Wakai; and Representatives Takayama, Gates, Hashimoto, Ichiyama, Kapela, Kitagawa, Lowen, Matayoshi, Nakamura, Perruso, Tokioka, Wildberger, Woodson, LoPresti, and Marten). If passed, Hawaii would join a growing list of nations,<sup>2</sup> the state of California, and numerous fashion leaders in saying no to fur industry cruelty and its public health risks.

Fashion design icons who have committed to innovative fur-free fashion include Armani, Banana Republic, BCBG, Burberry, Burlington Coat Factory, Calvin Klein, Coach, Diane von Furstenberg, DKNY, Gucci, H&M, Hugo Boss, Ralph Lauren, Stella McCartney, Tommy Hilfiger, Versace, and Zara. [Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo debuted a luxurious cruelty-free alternative](#) in 2018, noting that with “*technological advances in fabrications, we now have the ability to create a luxe aesthetic using non-animal fur.*”<sup>3</sup> The fashion world can and is already moving on.

Covid-19 exposed this industry as a serious contagion risk, and the reactionary culling of millions is a tragedy that ignores the real problem. The terrible events this past year have underscored the need and stirred calls worldwide for transformational change in the way humans trade in, consume, impact, and too often abuse nature. From the 2020 IPBES Pandemics Report:

**“The farming, trade and consumption of wildlife and wildlife-derived products (for ... fur and other products) have led to biodiversity loss, and emerging diseases, including SARS and COVID-19. ... high pandemic risk consumption patterns (e.g. use of fur from farmed wildlife)”<sup>4</sup>**

From the World Economic Forum’s 2020 *New Nature Economy Report* series:

**“There is no future for business as usual ... To successfully address [these challenges] will require tackling the ... drivers of nature loss - ... trade, production and consumption ... and the values and behaviours of society.”<sup>5</sup>**

A January 2021 WHO-FAO-OIE report concluded that SARS-CoV2 spillover from fur farm animals to humans poses a “serious public health and socio-economic threat”; and found that specifically, here in the United States:

- **The likelihood of the risk of introduction and spread of SARS-CoV-2 within fur farms is: VERY LIKELY**
- **The likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 spillover from mink fur farming to humans is: VERY LIKELY**

And

- **The likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 transmission from fur farming systems to susceptible wildlife populations is: LIKELY.<sup>6</sup>**

The WHO-FAO-OIE Report also described a “high occupational health risk” exists at fur farms, noting that by the time mink start showing symptoms, the disease may have already spread unnoticed and that, despite public awareness, the use of PPE at fur farms is not practiced routinely.<sup>7</sup>

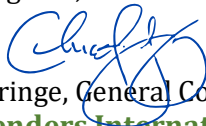
Studies also show the fur industry presents high climate and environmental costs, with significant emissions and land use requirements, as well as air and water pollutants emanating from animal waste (nitrogen, phosphorus), incineration (carbon monoxide, hydrochloric acid, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides), and tanning processes. Industrial animal farms are “extremely energy intensive ... requir[ing] disproportionately large inputs of fossil fuels.”<sup>8</sup> In 2012, the Advertising Standards Authority banned a fur ad (run by the European Fur Breeders Association), concluding that the ad’s claim that fur is ‘eco-friendly’ was misleading.<sup>9</sup>

**To produce 1 kg of fur requires more than 11 animals. ... Compared with textiles, fur has a higher impact on 17 of 18 environmental themes, including climate change, eutrophication and toxic emissions. In many cases fur scores markedly worse than textiles. ... The climate change impact of 1 kg of mink fur is five times higher than that of the highest-scoring textile ... This impact is not only high compared with other textiles. There are not many raw materials scoring this high per kg on climate change; the score of mink fur is similar to that of materials involving high fuel consumption, or solvents for extraction (e.g. precious metals). With an emission factor of about 110 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq. per kg fur, the impact on climate change equals a car drive of over 1,250 km. ... For land occupation, fur scores far higher than the other textiles. ... Two environmental impacts affect (local) air quality ... On both of these, fur scores far higher than the other textiles. ... Even in a conservative approach, the environmental impacts of 1 kg fur ... are a factor 2 to 28 times higher than those of common textiles. This is a very clear and consistent result, with indicator categories all pointing in the same direction.**<sup>10</sup>

Fur is a cruel industry. ADI investigations reveal nightmarish fur industry standard practices, where animals’ miserable lives in cramped, filthy cages meet brutal, abrupt ends, by electrocution (to their anus or genitals), suffocation, broken necks, or worse. We include here for your consideration, links to several ADI reports and videos ~ [A Lifetime: living and dying on a fur farm report](#)<sup>11</sup> and its [related video](#);<sup>12</sup> [Never Humane: Tragedy of the fox who almost got away](#);<sup>13</sup> and [Bloody Harvest: the real cost of fur](#).<sup>14</sup> It’s time to end this horrific practice.

We hope this informs your review, and we urge you to support [SB969 SD2 HD1](#) / [HB32 HD1](#), to join other leaders toward cruelty-free fashion innovation that recognizes and responds to the planetary crises of our time. Many thanks for your time and consideration.

All my best regards,



Christina Scaringe, General Counsel  
**Animal Defenders International**  
[www.ad-international.org](http://www.ad-international.org)

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ad-international.org](http://www.ad-international.org)

<sup>2</sup> Fur Farming bans: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands (moved up from a 2024 effective date due to covid outbreaks on fur farms there), Slovenia, and the UK. Similar measures under consideration: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine. Ban on breeding for fur: Hungary. Ban on mink imports: New Zealand. Ban on mink, fox, chinchilla fur skins imports: India. Fur trade/sales ban: California (US), Sao Paolo (Brazil).

<sup>3</sup> As reported by Georgia Murray in *Is this the Biggest Move in Banning Fur to Date?* yahoo!/sports (January 16, 2018), available at <https://sports.yahoo.com/biggest-move-banning-fur-date-180000485.html>.

<sup>4</sup> IPBES Pandemics Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics, Executive Summary (2020), available at <https://ipbes.net/pandemics>

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- <sup>5</sup> World Economic Forum's *New Nature Economy Report* series: *The Future of Nature and Business* (2020), available at [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_The\\_Future\\_Of\\_Nature\\_And\\_Business\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Future_Of_Nature_And_Business_2020.pdf).
- <sup>6</sup> *SARS-CoV-2 in animals used for fur farming*, World Health Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN; World Organisation for Animal Health (2021) (emphasis added), available at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-fur-farming-risk-assessment-2021.1>.
- <sup>7</sup> *SARS-CoV-2 in animals used for fur farming*, World Health Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN; World Organisation for Animal Health (2021), available at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-fur-farming-risk-assessment-2021.1>.
- <sup>8</sup> Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, *Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Animal Production in America, Executive Summary* (2008), available at [https://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2008/pcfifap\\_exec-summary.pdf](https://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2008/pcfifap_exec-summary.pdf).
- <sup>9</sup> As reported by Mark Sweney in '*Eco-friendly' fur ad banned. Fur breeders' campaign ruled misleading by ASA*, *The Guardian* (March 2012), available at <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/mar/21/eco-friendly-fur-ad-banned>.
- <sup>10</sup> Bijleveld, Korteland, Sevenster. *The Environmental impact of mink fur production*. Delft. (January 2011), available at [https://www.cedelft.eu/publicatie/the\\_environmental\\_impact\\_of\\_mink\\_fur\\_production/1131](https://www.cedelft.eu/publicatie/the_environmental_impact_of_mink_fur_production/1131).
- <sup>11</sup> *A Lifetime: living and dying on a fur farm*, Animal Defenders International Report (2017), available at [https://www.ad-international.org/admin/downloads/adi\\_f4d655d1c535636ff5fab85010358c7d.pdf](https://www.ad-international.org/admin/downloads/adi_f4d655d1c535636ff5fab85010358c7d.pdf).
- <sup>12</sup> *Exposed: The tragic short lives of foxes on a fur farm*, Animal Defenders International (2017), available at <https://www.ad-international.org/fur/go.php?id=4440&ssi=19>.
- <sup>13</sup> *Never Humane: tragedy of the fox who almost got away*, Animal Defenders International (2017), available at <https://www.ad-international.org/fur/go.php?id=4455&ssi=19>.
- <sup>14</sup> *Bloody Harvest: the real cost of fur*, Animal Defenders International (2010), available at <https://www.ad-international.org/publications/go.php?id=1836>.



525 East Cotati Avenue  
Cotati, California 94931

T 707.795.2533  
F 707.795.7280

info@aldf.org  
aldf.org

March 30, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

**Re: Testimony in support of *An Act Relating to Animal Fur Act (SB 969 SD2 HD1)***

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and honorable members of the House Committee on Finance,

On behalf of the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) and our supporters in Hawaii, thank you for this opportunity to submit a letter of support for *An Act Relating to Animal Fur Products (SB 969 SD2 HD1)*. We thank Senators Keohokalole, Gabbard, Kidani, Lee, and San Buenaventura for introducing this important legislation and Representative Gregg Takayama for introducing companion legislation in the House. We respectfully urge your support for SB 969 SD2 HD1 to help making Hawaii the next state to go fur-free.

ALDF is the nation's preeminent legal advocacy organization for animals. The organization's mission is to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. We are working nationwide to combat the cruel fur industry across multiple legal channels.

SB 969 SD2 HD1 would prohibit the sale and manufacture of new fur products, including clothing, fashion accessories, and home décor, in the state. Every year, millions of animals, including foxes, wolves, minks, and rabbits, are brutally killed so people can wear their fur. The vast majority of the animals exploited by the fur industry are raised on fur farms, often in factory-farm-like conditions, and some are trapped in the wild. If passed, Hawaii could be the second state in the country to take a strong stance against the cruel and unnecessary fur trade within its borders.

**Fur production spreads COVID-19 and is a breeding ground for the next pandemic.**

Intensive confinement systems on fur farms present conditions ripe for disease transmission. Recent reports from mink fur farms abroad have revealed dangerous links between the fur industry and the further spread of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) to humans. In 2020, minks on hundreds of fur factory farms in Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the United States tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. In Denmark and the Netherlands, research shows that farmed minks spread a mutated form of the virus to humans—the only known animal-to-human transmission outside the original source—and such mutations might reduce the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines.

**All our clients are innocent**

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To protect public health, European governments have killed nearly 20 million minks and France, Hungary, and the Netherlands passed laws to ban fur farming. In the United States, COVID-19 has been found on fur farms in at least four states— Michigan, Oregon, Utah, and Wisconsin — and as many as 15,000 minks in Utah and Wisconsin have died from COVID-19. In December, a wild mink in Utah tested positive for the virus during a screening of wildlife surrounding infected fur farms, highlighting the risk of viral spill-over to wildlife populations.

Research has shown that other animals commonly farmed for their fur, such as raccoon dogs, palm civets, and foxes, may also serve as intermediate hosts of other coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV (the virus that causes SARS).

### **Fur requires significant animal cruelty.**

Whether trapped in the wild or bred to die on fur farms, animals exploited by the fur industry endure tremendous suffering.

Animals on fur farms are typically confined to tiny wire cages for their entire lives. Oftentimes, these cages are outdoors— stacked in wooden sheds that provide no protection from the heat or cold. On other farms, animals are kept in cages in barns that are poorly ventilated and high concentrations of ammonia — a byproduct of animals' waste — burns the eyes and throats of animals and workers alike. Unable to engage in most of their natural behaviors, these animals routinely resort to self-mutilation, obsessive pacing, and infanticide. Fur farms kill animals through gassing, electrocution, neck-breaking, and poisoning. Undercover investigations on fur farms have documented egregious cruelty — including animals being skinned alive.

Wild animals trapped for their fur also suffer. Trapping is largely regulated at the state level, and most states provide minimal protections for fur-bearing animals. In some states, it's legal to set a trap and not check it for days. Desperate and terrified, animals will sometimes chew their own legs off in an attempt to escape. Trappers shoot, strangle, and bludgeon trapped animals.

### **Fur puts our environment at risk.**

The fur industry also poses serious environmental threats. On fur factory farms, waste runoff from animals pollutes the soil and waterways. The tanning and dyeing process uses toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, like chromium and formaldehyde, to prevent the skin from decaying.

Studies have found that among synthetic and natural textiles, fur is the worst-offending in 17 of the 18 environmental categories considered. The studies also found that the climate change impact of mink fur is five times higher than the second worst-offending textile (wool) and six times higher than a faux-fur alternative. This is largely due to the feed, land use, toxicity, and manure of the fur industry. Fortunately, innovative technology has produced an array of alternatives with the same warmth, look and feel as fur – without the cruelty or environmental concerns.

### **Fur alternatives exist.**

There is no justification to continue to breed or trap and kill animals for their fur considering the availability of faux fur and alternative products that are virtually indistinguishable from animal fur. So indistinguishable that, in 2017, we called for a Baltimore furrier to be investigated for false advertising when they used an image of a faux fur jacket from the HBO series Game of Thrones to advertise the animal furs in their store.

### **Fur-free policies are on the rise.**

Consumers' concern for the animal cruelty and environmental threats from fur is leading fashion brands and legislators away from animal fur.

Hundreds of retailers, brands, and designers at all price points have announced fur-free policies, including: Macy's, Nordstrom, Bloomingdale's, Adidas, Michael Kors, Armani, Calvin Klein, Kenneth Cole, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, The North Face, and JCPenney.

In 2019, California became the first state in the nation to ban the sale of fur. This year, states like Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, and Rhode Island are considering similar bans. Abroad, at least eighteen European countries, including Germany, Austria, Croatia, and the United Kingdom are in the process of phasing out or have already banned fur farming. India has banned the importation of fur pelts, and São Paulo, Brazil, also banned the sale of fur products in 2015.

### **Hawaii, time to go fur-free.**

The sale of new fur products in Hawaii is inconsistent with its position as a leader on animal protection and environmental issues. By passing SB 969 SD2 HD1, Hawaii will lead the fur-free charge while reinforcing the shift to fur-free products that is occurring in the fashion industry.

Hawaii should seize this opportunity to more closely align the state's laws with its values. Please help make Hawaii the next state to go fur-free by advancing *An Act Relating to Animal Fur Products* (SB 969 SD2 HD1).

Thank you for your time and consideration. Mahalo nui.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Harris

--

**Stephanie J. Harris** | Senior Legislative Affairs Manager  
Animal Legal Defense Fund | [aldf.org](http://aldf.org)  
[sharris@aldf.org](mailto:sharris@aldf.org) | 617-955-7500







PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

March 30, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Members of the Committee on Finance  
Hawaii House of Representatives

Dear Rep. Luke and Committee Members:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide—including more than 20,000 in Hawaii—to urge committee members to vote “yes” on SB969 SD2. This lifesaving legislation would ban the manufacture and sale of fur products, preventing countless animals from being violently killed.

For decades, PETA and our international affiliates have exposed horrific cruelty to animals on fur farms around the world. Investigators have documented that animals are electrocuted, bludgeoned, gassed, and even skinned alive—all just to make a coat, a collar, or a trinket. Minks and other animals exploited for fur are typically confined to filthy, cramped wire cages without enough room to turn around or even fully stretch out. As a result of severe stress, animals on fur farms often resort to self-mutilation or cannibalization of their cagemates. It's no surprise that these horrid fur factory farm conditions have led to a growing number of countries with mink-related outbreaks of COVID-19.

Passing SB969 SD2 would send a strong message to the rest of the world that killing animals for their fur has no place in a compassionate society. The movement against fur is gaining momentum. Macy's and Bloomingdale's recently joined hundreds of other major retailers and fashion brands—including Chanel, Prada, Gucci, Versace, Burberry, and Michael Kors—in banning fur, and the state of California has banned the manufacture and sale of fur items. In addition, more than a dozen countries have banned fur farms.

Hawaii is forward-thinking, as you've proved by banning wild-animal acts in circuses. You now have another opportunity to set a compassionate example by voting in favor of SB969 SD2.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Newkirk  
President

[Washington](#)

1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

[Los Angeles](#)

2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

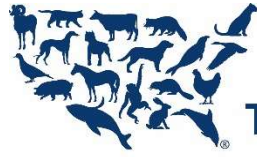
[Norfolk](#)

501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

[Info@peta.org](mailto:Info@peta.org)  
[PETA.org](http://PETA.org)

[Affiliates:](#)

- [PETA Asia](#)
- [PETA India](#)
- [PETA France](#)
- [PETA Australia](#)
- [PETA Germany](#)
- [PETA Netherlands](#)
- [PETA Foundation \(U.K.\)](#)



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES

**To:** Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

**In Support of:** SB 969, HD1, Relating to Animal Fur Products

**Date:** March 31, 2021

**Testimony by:** Lindsay Vierheilig, Hawaii State Director, The Humane Society of the United States

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Humane Society of the United States and our members and supporters across Hawaii in strong support of SB 969, HD1, relating to animal fur products.

At the Humane Society of the United States, it is our mission to fight against the worst forms of animal cruelty here in Hawaii and elsewhere in the world. Unfortunately, there is simply no way to humanely produce fur. Every year, over 100 million animals, including chinchillas, foxes, mink, coyotes and racoon dogs are killed for their fur. Eighty-five percent of all fur comes from fur factory farms, where undomesticated animals spend their entire lives in cramped cages, deprived of the ability to engage in natural behaviors. Living in these conditions causes enormous stress, which can lead to self-mutilation and other issues. These animals are then killed by neck-breaking, crude gassing or anal-electrocution. Fur producers have even been documented skinning animals alive. In the wild, animals are caught in cruel leghold traps, where they often languish for days without food or water.

The fur industry also causes major environmental pollution. Not only does the tanning and dying process use toxic chemicals like formaldehyde and chromium to prevent skin decay, but the runoff from animals on factory farms pollutes waterways and soil.

The concern for animal welfare continues to grow in Hawaii and across the States, and consumers increasingly want products that do not involve animal cruelty. Companies are responding by aligning their policies with their customers' values and announcing fur-free policies.

Hawaii now has a chance to take an affirmative stand against the cruel practices and environmental harm inherent in the fur industry, as well as the COVID-19 related public health risks that continue to be prevalent. For these reasons, we respectfully ask that the members of the committee support the passage of SB 969, HD1.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Vierheilig  
Hawaii State Director  
[lvierheilig@humanesociety.org](mailto:lvierheilig@humanesociety.org)

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 10:17:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Abigail Kammerzell	H&M	Support	No

Comments:

**Statement of Support of SB 969**

Dear Chair Luke and Finance committee members:

I'm writing to show our support for SB 969, which prohibits the manufacture and sale of new fur products in Hawaii.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Abigail Kammerzell

US Sustainability Manager, H&M



Testimony of Mike Brown  
Organization: Natural Fibers Alliance  
Bill: SB969

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1375. The Natural Fibers Alliance represents the interests of wool, leather, fur, and other natural materials.

We oppose this bill for several reasons.

First, this bill is unnecessary and is being opposed by the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Hawaii Department of Agriculture and small business retail community and associations. During a global pandemic, any legislation that would result in a loss of income to any small business is cruel and should not be considered.

Next, Workers at fur farms are considered essential workers and have already begun receiving vaccines. Additionally, vaccines for mink are being rolled out and distributed in the immediate future.

According to public health experts, vaccinations greatly reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. In Israel, for example, 90% of people over the age of 60 have been vaccinated, and cases of the virus [have plunged](#).

Just as vaccines have allowed state officials to loosen COVID restrictions on other businesses, vaccines make this bill moot.

Cases of coronavirus on fur farms in the United States are also far less than what Europe experienced. [Only 19 incidents](#) have occurred on American farms, compared to 317 in Europe. Farms have also increased their biosecurity measures during the pandemic, adding a further layer of protection that will continue into the future.

This bill is based on flawed logic. There have been more outbreaks of coronavirus among cats and dogs - [72](#) - than there have been among mink. Under the logic of this bill, all animal derived products should be banned.

Most people would see that as overkill. The same is true for the government telling people what to wear.

I want to emphasize that this bill is not about public health as brought up in the during the introduction of this bill. This legislation is being pushed by animal activists who simply want to shut down the animal use industry. They don't think people should be

allowed to produce or buy fur - or leather, wool, cashmere, silk, and other animal-derived fibers.

In fact, these activists should take a closer look in the mirror. Their harmful tactics and outright disbelief in the fur industry has dangerous consequences for our environment. It is well documented that synthetic materials used by the "fast fashion" industry is playing a key role in the pollution of our waterways and the overflow of our landfills.

There have also been numerous instances of criminal activists committing economic sabotage against fur farms and retail stores throughout the US. Now, like-minded groups are using the legislative process under the guise of public health. These same activists want to shut down every dairy farm, cattle ranch, and wool operation throughout our country. We should not go down this road.

Lastly, public policy goal with coronavirus is to allow places to reopen as soon as it is safe to do so. This bill does the opposite. It punishes the very same small businesses the state is trying to protect.

This is unfair and it is bad policy. I urge the committee to reject this unnecessary legislation.

## MISSED TESTIMONY HAWAII - OPPOSED TO SB969

### MELANIE CALANDRA TESTIMONY

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify against the proposed ban House Bill Number SB969.

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. 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.

## **ALAN HERSCOVICI TESTIMONY**

### **Testimony “opposed” to SB969**

- by Alan Herscovici, TruthAboutFur.com (Tel: 514-865-7601)

My name is Alan Herscovici. I was raised in the Montreal fur trade, and have spent the past 40 years studying and writing about the industry. I am now the senior researcher at TruthAboutFur.com – a web portal dedicated to providing accurate information about the North American fur trade.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today, because I am deeply troubled that you are being asked to make an important decision based on a false and unfair portrayal of the fur trade. In fact, the “Findings” that introduce this proposal to ban the sale of fur products in Hawaii repeat, verbatim, one-sided and inaccurate claims promoted by anti-fur lobby groups.

For example: the claim that animals used for fur “endure tremendous suffering” is simply not true. Farm-raised mink receive excellent nutrition and care; in fact, this is the only way to produce the high-quality fur for which North America is known. Norms for pen sizes and handling mink have been developed and approved by veterinarians, animal scientists, and animal-welfare authorities.

The claim that fur farmers use “the cheapest killing methods available” is also completely misleading. Farm-raised mink are quickly and humanely euthanized with bottled Carbon Monoxide. CO is so quick and painless that, unfortunately, many people accidentally die each year because they have been unknowingly exposed to it.

The “Findings” also fail to explain that because farm-raised mink are not food animals, they are spared the stress of being loaded onto trucks and transported to distant abattoirs. This is an important advantage from an animal-welfare perspective.

It is also insidious 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. When pigs develop Swine Flu (H1N1) or chickens develop Avian Flu, we do not ban the sale of pork and poultry – although is exactly what animal activists have called for. Instead, farmers work closely with public officials to resolve the problems, as mink farmers have done.

The “Findings” fail to mention that half the fur produced in the US is taken from the wild, from abundant species. Many furbearer populations would have to be culled even if we did not use fur: Overpopulated beavers flood homes and roads; raccoons spread rabies and other dangerous diseases; coyotes are the main predators of young calves and lambs...and even pet dogs and cats; and the list goes on. Regulated trapping, as practiced in North America, can help to maintain more stable and healthy wildlife populations. But if we must cull some of these animals, surely it is more ethical to use their fur than to throw it away?

We should also remember that when we buy fur we support the livelihoods and cultures of rural communities – including many First Nations communities.

Finally, it is highly misleading to claim that the availability of alternatives renders the use of fur “unjustifiable”. Most clothing is now synthetic, made from petroleum, a non-renewable and polluting resource. Fur, by contrast, is produced responsibly and sustainably, and after decades of use can be thrown into the garden compost where it will biodegrade completely. Environmentalists say we should buy better quality apparel, and keep it longer. So we should be promoting fur, not seeking to ban it.

Those who support **SB969** no doubt have good intentions, but without accurate information, good intentions can have unintended and counter-productive consequences. Despite the “luxury” image, the fur trade is a small and artisanal industry that has been unfairly stigmatized and scapegoated; it does not have the resources to fight wealthy, media-savvy lobby groups.

I hope that these few comments will encourage you to reject **SB969**, and take the time to properly research the true environmental contributions of the modern North American fur trade.

Thank you!

#### **MICHAEL WHELAN TESTIMONY**

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you. My name is Michael Whelan and I am the ED of Fur Commission USA, the national trade association representing the mink farmers of the US.

I submitted written testimony, detailing the animal rightists endless efforts to ban fur, and the continuous and unsupported accusations of animal cruelty on our mink farms.

Today I'd like to take a few moments to address the fear mongering used around mink and COVID

First of all, mink farmers have long practiced strict on-farm biosecurity, as we have known for a long time that mink are highly susceptible to certain diseases. The protocols in place, are the primary reason that the few US farms infected by COVID have been isolated & manageable. The USDA, the CDC, and the State authorities continue to work closely with the farmers and their veterinarians.

Since August, I have been in weekly contact with the 4 respective state veterinarians that have been dealing with this issue. Of the 16 farms that contracted the virus last fall, 13 have now tested free of live virus in mink. They also set traps in areas outside each of the farms to monitor and test wildlife. To date, no other species have tested positive for the virus. The last 3 farms are awaiting the most recent test results. We are confident that within two weeks there will be no live virus found in any US raised mink.

On the proactive front; Zoetis animal health has finished clinical testing on a mink vaccine that is now awaiting approval from the USDA. We expect to have 2 million doses available to the farmers by June.



We as citizens rely on government to craft laws and regulations based on facts and science. We rely on officials to research the issues, using information from reliable and knowledgeable sources. Here are the facts.

- There is no evidence, nor are there any suspected cases of humans contracting COVID from mink in North America.
- No mutations of the virus have been found in any of the testing on US mink.
- There are no documented cases of any other wildlife species contracting the virus from mink.

In closing; I urge this committee to reject the rhetoric, rely on the science, and OPPOSE SB969.

Thank you

### **CATHERINE MOORES TESTIMONY**

Good day Mr. Chairman and house judiciary committee; I can understand why some people feel that the fur trade should end. I had once felt that way.

Growing up in a rural community in Eastern Canada, I was passionate about helping animals. Our community lacked an animal shelter or a veterinary clinic, so I was the girl that cared for every sick or injured animal, and rescued every stray cat or dog.

When I was fifteen, I read a book written by Ingrid Newkirk, the founder of PETA, that convinced me that using animals for any purpose was inhumane. I immediately stopped eating meat, stopped using products that had been tested on animals, and became opposed to using animals for clothing.

At that age, I did not question the validity of the information that had been presented to me. Rather, I accepted it as truth, adjusted my moral compass, and became a devoted advocate for the animal rights movement.

At the age of eighteen, I left home to attend an agricultural college to begin pre-veterinary studies. Over the next four years, I watched how the farmers interacted with and cared for their animals, and realized that not only did they share a connection with the animals, but also a respect for the animals. That was the beginning of a journey that changed my perspective from one of anti-animal use to responsible animal use.

Since then, I have committed 18 years of my life to building and managing a large mink farm in Eastern Canada. I have immersed myself in this sector, which I have grown to understand intimately, and to love. Throughout my journey, keeping our mink healthy, comfortable and content has been priority. Other mink farmers share this priority. In fact, we all understand that it is critical to the viability of a farm.

## **KIM SALVO TESTIMONY**

As a lifelong furrier at Anamoda Inc., one of New York's premier wholesale fur companies, I cannot believe any intelligent group of people, yet alone elected officials would even consider SB969 – naming the trade in animal fur as a cruel offence at any level anywhere in America.

Fur fashions do not break any laws. They do not harm people. They are not a hazard. Like any solid business, the fur industry boasts a long time mark in fashion, employing a host of uniquely talented fur workers and related skills. The artisan craft of making a fur garment is irreplaceable by any chemical contaminating impostor material. The fur trade acts responsibly in breeding, harvesting and trapping our natural resource which is 100% renewable, responsible to wildlife conservation and “green” before anyone started using that trendy catch phrase.

For any government entity to make our product illegal to make or sell or possibly even wear is unconstitutional and against any consumer's freedom of choice. People have donned fur fashions since the beginning of civilization. And unlike the animal activist bullies, furriers do not go around harassing and forcing people to wear fur. It is a product that reveals a person's individual style; a choice to wear a natural hand-crafted everlasting product for years on end.

The current arguments from radical animal rights activists are ignorant and misinformed. Contrary to what this legislative body is coerced into believing what are a “wide array of alternative for fashion and apparel” synthetics and imitation poly-based fabric and material are not fur. Impostors are not fur. The misinformation they present is just their bullying technique to force legislators to make divisive decisions on a free market and free enterprise which does no harm to the general population.

It is clear that the sponsors of SB969 did not bother to research the fur industry. A couple of headlines and some animal rights propaganda is no justification for this bill.

I love my job and the communistic thought of banning any consumer product that eradicates businesses and employment and crushes the livelihood of those earning an honest living to support our families and contribute to the economy is as un-American as you can get.

I implore this body of government for a vote of NO and to OPPOSE this mockery of our right to make, sell, purchase or wear fur fashions and related items.

Thank you for your attention and opposition to House Bill No. SB 969.

## **JOHN DANIELS TESTIMONY**

My name is John Daniel and I'm the President of the National Trappers Association. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Our planet, planet Earth, is one in which for one entity to live, eat or have shelter another must die, from the smallest organism to the largest. The human species is no different. Our roads, our food system, our shelter, health care, education, I could go on for pages. Every human whether a vegetarian, a meat eater, a wearer of all natural materials, a wearer of man-made materials; and I

could go on but I'm sure you get the point, is a taker of other lives so that they may exist on this planet.

The responsible repurposing of animals pelts for clothing and other products is a responsible, respectful and truthful way to utilize the animal that died for our existence. Wearing or using any other form of material and thinking we are doing anything different is a refusal to see reality.

The passage of a bill the eliminates the responsible usage and repurposing of fur products only supports a fallacy and is a wasteful concept that does nothing to change the requirements to exist on this planet, it only changes the source.

### **NICK POLOGEORGIS TESTIMONY**

I oppose SB969.

For over 40 years groups like PETA and HSUS have been hard at work to convince consumers to stop buying fur. Consumers have been bombarded, more than any other product category. Still, they are buying fur. In fact the global industry is a \$30 billion dollar industry. Consumers have listened, perhaps they have done their research and they have made up their own minds. And no matter what claims are thrown at you about consumer attitudes and research, the cash register tells the truest story. If nobody was buying fur retailers wouldn't be selling it and manufacturers wouldn't be producing it...and a ban would be a moot point.

Fur is an easy target. It is a luxury product. And for those in the business of ending animal use, it is an easy foot in the door. But what comes next?

I wear leather shoes. I love to wrap myself in my cozy wool blanket. And I look forward to a grilled burger or juicy steak. There are members of my family who would not be with us today were it not for the medicines available to them through animal testing protocols. Which of these will be the next target of these animal extremist groups?

Because of a small group of very vocal activists you are making a choice for the rest of us. You are taking away our freedom of choice. You are assuming that we are neither smart enough nor considerate enough to make these decisions for ourselves.

I urge you to oppose SB969.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 12:32:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PJ Smith	THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke and committee members – My name is PJ Smith, and I’m the Director of Fashion Policy for the Humane Society of the United States. On behalf of our supporters across Hawaii, we urge you to vote YES on SB 969.

We very much appreciate the committee’s time today. SB 969 is essentially the same bill this committee passed last year. This year, it has already passed the Senate and the House Judiciary committee with broad support and has even been endorsed by InStyle magazine, H&M, Zara and Stella McCartney.

There are so many alternatives available now that have the same look and feel of fur without the unnecessary cruelty. Because of a growing demand for humane and sustainable products, the new faux fur hitting the market is either corn-based or made from recycled ocean plastic, which is better for the planet, as well as animals. This is why much of the fashion industry in Hawaii has already switched to these alternatives, and as written local retailers will have time transition to these innovative materials, as well.

Last year, only \$2000 of fur apparel was imported into Hawaii. At the height of tourism in 2019, the total import value of all fur products was a mere \$38,000 Statewide, which lends confidence to our statement that the passage of this important Fur Ban will *not* hurt our local retailers and will not negatively impact State revenue collections.

Again, we very much appreciate your time today, and hope you’ll support SB 969. I’m available if you have any questions. Mahalo.



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT  
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII**

**March 31, 2021**

**Re: SB 969 SD2 HD1 Relating to Animal Fur Products**

Good afternoon Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901, RMH is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

While we understand the intent, we are OPPOSED to SB 969 SD2 HD1 Relating to Animal Fur Products. This measure beginning July 1, 2021, prohibits the manufacture or importation for sale of certain animal fur products in the State. Beginning December 1, 2021, prohibits the sale, offer for sale, display for sale, trade, or otherwise distribution of certain animal fur products in the State; and is effective 7/1/2050.

**Retailers are one of the hardest hit industries due to the pandemic and this type of ban would hurt our retailers during a time when they are struggling to remain open.** Stores had to endure government mandated shutdowns, limited capacity in stores and more that affected business operations. We have seen since last year that sales are down and awfully slow for many of our retailers. For some, certain types of merchandise are not moving fast due to the lack of visitors to our islands. Stores cannot afford anymore losses as many retailers – local and national – continue to struggle to keep their doors open and their workers employed. However we continue to see more and more businesses closing their door forever as they are not able to afford to stay open and are in debt.

**This bill would cause even greater hardship as retailers would have to either liquidate their merchandise or give it away to comply with the December 2021 deadline.** Not all stores are able to send their fur merchandise outside of Hawaii to a sister store.

We also must remember that **fur products would include not only coats, and fur trim on clothing, but shoes, hair accessories, purses, belts, adornment on keepsakes, and more.** Some faux fur almost resembles real fur. We also wonder how this is going to be enforced and are they experts in fur.

We recognize that many top designer brands are already ceasing to use fur in its designs. We are also aware that **many of the animals are humanely raised on farms**, just like cows, chickens and pigs that end up in our grocery stores. **We want to also point out that many of the alternatives to fur – faux/vegan fur – are more hazardous to the environment as they are made from petroleum-based materials like liquid plastic.**

Retailers are no longer the driving engine for trends. Customers determine the trends, and the type of inventory items retailers have in their stores. Businesses cannot afford any more hardship as we are seeing more and more retailers closing their doors forever. And as a result, many of our friends, family and neighbors no longer have jobs and are not contributing to Hawaii's high rate of unemployment.

We hope that you will hold this bill.

Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.



March 31, 2021

Chairwoman Sylvia Luke  
Members of the Committee  
Hawaii State Capital  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Statement in Support of Hawaii State Bill 969 (Animal Fur Products)

Distinguished Chairwoman and Committee Members:

On behalf of Fur Free Society, Inc., a nonprofit tax-exempt organization, I strongly urge you to support SB 969. All around the globe, countries and jurisdictions are banning fur farming and the breeding of animals for fur, including the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Netherlands and Germany, the latter of which ended fur farming by adopting restrictions so stringent that fur farming is no longer economically viable. Luxembourg has banned fur farming because *“animals are no longer considered as a thing, but as gifted non-human living beings with sensitivity and holders of certain rights”*. India has banned the importation of exotic animal skins, sparing the lives of minks, foxes, chinchillas, and reptiles such as crocodiles and alligators. Bills to ban fur are also being introduced elsewhere, including Ireland, Norway, Poland and Estonia.

Major designers are also announcing fur-free policies, including Armani, Gucci, Versace, Chanel, Coach, Burberry, Ralph Lauren, Michael Kors, Diane Von Furstenberg, Hugo Boss, Donna Karan & DKNY, Furla, von Holzhausen, The Kooples, Zhivago, Maison Margiela, Bottega Veneta, Nicholas K., TJ Maxx/Marshalls and Farfetch.com, Jimmy Choo, BCBMaxazria, and Jean Paul Gaultier, who called fur farming *“absolutely deplorable”*. Stores are refusing to sale fur, including Anglicare Australia, Burlington Stores, Stein Mart, and VF Corporation, parent company to The North Face, Vans, Timberland, Nautica and Yoox Net-A-Porter Group, the parent company of the world’s leading online luxury fashion retailer, Net-a-Porter. Fashion weeks, magazines and modeling agencies have also adopted fur free policies, including Nordic Fashion Week Association, London Fashion Week, InStyle Magazine, and the Linden Staub modeling agency.

Our strongest argument for the ban on fur sales, however, is that the use of fur is not *“natural”*, *“sustainable”*, *“eco-friendly”* or *“green”*. The fur industry greenwashes the real environmental

impact, using false marketing claims to confuse and mislead consumers. The reality is that fur farming has the same adverse environmental impact as factory farming, polluting rivers and waters with industrial and animal waste. According to a 2013 Water Quality Survey commissioned by Nova Scotia Environment, lakes near mink fur farms in Nova Scotia, Canada are seriously degraded primarily from high phosphorus inputs resulting from releases emanating from mink farming operations. The David Suzuki Foundation report, *The Impacts of the Mink Industry on Freshwater Lakes in Nova Scotia*, concluded that lakes and rivers are under “serious threat”, with several lakes developing blue-green algae. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency warns that nutrient pollution from excess nitrogen and phosphorus from animal manure is a “leading cause of degradation of U.S. water quality” causing depletion of dissolved oxygen that fish and aquatic life need in order to survive, and that algal blooms endanger human health. A Groundbreaking Independent Research Study on the Environmental Impact of Mink Fur Production (CE Delft, January 2011) concluded that in 17 of the 18 environmental impacts studied, mink scored *worse* than other textiles, and that carcinogens like chromium and formaldehyde used in the dressing and dyeing process compromise a fur’s biodegradability. In fact, the fashion industry itself acknowledges the detrimental impact of fur. In the *Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017*, published by Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group, the report concluded that animal products are not only unjustified and cruel, but are also worse for the environment, concluding that among 14 common fashion materials, animal products were listed among *the top most environmentally detrimental materials* (emphasis added). The foregoing studies and reports are available at your request.

Chemical and organic compounds used to “dress” and “dye” fur are similar to compounds used for leather and are highly detrimental to the environment and are known to be carcinogenic to humans. These chemicals include formaldehyde, chromium, aluminum, ammonia, chlorine, lead, methanol, sulfuric acid, toluene, chlorobenzene and ethylene glycol. The World Health Organization (2001, 79:7809) has warned that tannery pollution threatens the health of Bangladesh residents, finding that approximately 90% of people who live and work in the Kamrangirchar and Hazaribagh regions of India, where hazardous chemicals are discharged into the air, streets and river, suffer from diseases of occupation and environmental toxicity and die before the age of 50. An Italian investigation also found Chrome VI (Hexavalent), Chrome III (Trivalent), Formaldehyde and Nonylphenol Ethoxylate on clothing intended for children under the age of 36 months. From the upfront production process to the end result in stores, fur production is highly detrimental to the environmental and hazardous to human health. Fortunately, innovative technology has produced an array of alternatives with the same warmth, look and feel as fur, but without the cruelty or environmental concerns.

We thank you for your time and attention to this matter and I ask that you support SB 969.

*Kimberly C. Moore*

Kimberly C. Moore, Esq.  
Director of Public Relations  
Fur Free Society, Inc.  
Contact: P.O. Box 6871, Towson, MD 21285  
703-659-5643



**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 12:19:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eric Kaneshiro	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Although I do not foresee any impact on me, as someone who hunts, as I do not intend to sell any fur products. I also do not see the need for this bill.

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 1:36:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Surprised to learn this was not already a law ! We do not need to harm animals anymore to clothe our bodies. The fur industry needs to be reduced and not encouraged to further their activities Thank you for allowing testimony. Aloha

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:05:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Felix Poza Pena	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Statement of Support of SB 969**

Dear Chair Luke and Finance Committee Members:

I'm writing to show our support for SB 969, which prohibits the manufacture and sale of new fur products in Hawaii.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,

Félix Poza Pena



## IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

**Date:** Tuesday, March 30, 2021

**To:** Chairwoman Sylvia Luke and Members of the Committee on Finance

**Submitted by:** Julie Massa, Fur Campaigner, In Defense of Animals, 828-320-0059

**Re: Testimony in strong SUPPORT of the Fur Sales Ban SB969 SD2**

Dear Chairwoman Sylvia Luke and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to respectfully urge support for **SB969 SD2** to make it unlawful to sell, give, or manufacture a new fur product in the state. If passed, **SB969 SD2** would make Hawaii the second state in the nation to ban the cruel and unnecessary fur trade within its borders.

Simply put, the sale of fur products in Hawaii is inconsistent with its position as a world leader on animal welfare and environmental issues.

Regarding animal welfare, it is well-accepted that animal cruelty is inherent in the fur industry. Each year, more than 100 million animals are killed for their fur. Most are raised on fur factory farms where they spend their entire lives in cramped cages and are deprived of everything wild animals need to thrive. They are bludgeoned, gassed, and genitally or anally electrocuted before their fur is ripped from their bodies. They may even be skinned alive.

In the wild, animals are often caught in crippling leg-hold traps for days without food or water. These archaic traps are indiscriminate, often maiming and killing non-target animals, including threatened species and household pets.

The fur industry also poses serious environmental threats. On fur factory farms, waste runoff from animals pollutes the soil and waterways. The tanning and dying process uses toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, like chromium and formaldehyde, to prevent the skin from decaying. Fortunately, innovative technology has produced an array of alternatives with the same warmth, look and feel as fur but without cruelty or environmental concerns.

The fur industry also endangers public health. Mink are highly susceptible to COVID-19, and animals on mink farms worldwide have tested positive for the deadly virus. Mink raised and killed for their fur are forced to live with thousands upon thousands of other mink, making the spread of the novel coronavirus inevitable. The Danish government discovered COVID-19 mutations were being passed from mink to fur farm workers and back again. Millions of mink were killed, and the mutated strains of the novel coronavirus threaten the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines.

Moreover, consumers' growing concern for animal welfare and environmental degradation caused by the fur industry is leading fashion brands, cities, and countries to move away from animal fur once and for all. With an abundance of high-quality faux furs available, animal fur is outdated and unnecessary. Bloomingdale's, Macy's, Nordstrom, and TJ Maxx have all committed to going fur-free. In 2019, California became the first state in the nation to ban fur sales.

By supporting **SB969 SD2**, you can increase community awareness of animal welfare, mitigate the environmental harm and public health issues caused by the fur industry, and bolster the demand for sustainable and innovative alternatives.

For the foregoing reasons, we kindly request your support of **SB969 SD2**.

Sincerely,

Julie Massa

Wild Animals Project Manager & Volunteer Director

e: [julie@idausa.org](mailto:julie@idausa.org)

**SB-969-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 2:28:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
AMANDA HENSON	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against SB969 by representing Animal Rights Initiative Oahu and its many local supporters.. Not only is this practice toxic to our environment, but it has also been discovered that minks can act as a reservoir for SARS-CoV-2, including a mutated version of the virus: the cluster 5 variant, which has the potential to cause a new pandemic wave due to its decreased sensitivity to antibodies. At least nine countries have experienced outbreaks amongst the animals and employees on fur farms: Denmark, the Netherlands, Canada, Italy, Spain, Greece, Germany, Lithuania, and Sweden. Several US states have as well, including Michigan, Wisconsin, Oregon, and Utah, with Utah now reporting infected wild animals around the immediate vicinity of farms.

Additionally, the animals' manure and the incineration of their bodies (a common method of disposal) release air pollutants, which include carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur dioxide (SO2), hydrochloric acid (HCl), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), dioxins, particulates, and heavy metals. Nitrogen and phosphorus in factory farms' manure runoff lead to toxic algae growth in waterways, causing biodiversity loss and rendering lakes unswimmable. When algae blooms occur, it limits the amount of oxygen for other aquatic species and causes dead zones, killing indigenous species.

Fur farming is not only a wildlife concern but also an ethical concern. "Numerous scientific reports have indicated that severe health problems are inherent to fur production and that animals on all fur farms have been found to display physical and

behavioral abnormalities, such as infected wounds, missing limbs from biting incidents, eye infections, bent feet, mouth deformities, self-mutilation, cannibalism of dead siblings or offspring, and other stress-related stereotypical behavior, such as

pacing along the cage wall, repetitive circling or nodding of the head.” Fur harvesting methods including gassing, neck breaking, and anal or genital electrocution—none of which are reliable at killing the animals before they are skinned or live-plucked for

their fur while still conscious, a process which causes extreme pain.

## SOLUTION

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With over 230 mainstream brands and retailers, including Nordstrom, Gap Inc, Zara, Macy's, H&M, Gucci, and more banning fur from their products—plus a vast amount of countries once known for fur farming, including Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Hungary, and others—already banning fur farms or expediting their closures to 2021, Animal Rights Initiative is calling on the Hawaii State legislature to join them and ban fur sales statewide.