

House Judiciary Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

March 19, 2024

Re: Testimony in **Opposition** to House bill No. 7454 – TRADE IN ANIMAL FUR PRODUCTS ACT

Dear Chair Craven and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am John Mirkopoulos of Elan Furs speaking on behalf of my business and all retail fur stores in America.

I vehemently oppose H 7454 – An act obliterating the sale of legal fur products with civil penalties for violations of such transactions; namely another attempt to ban the sale of natural, everlasting fur fashions.

I oppose H 7454 because the fur industry contributes about \$40 billion to the global economy. Canada's fur trade contributes over \$800 million annually to the Canadian economy. In the UK, the fur trade is worth around £200 million annually. It is beneficial for the fur trade because it brings in a large sums of tax dollars every year to the economy. The USA is the largest importer of fur products, accounting for approximately 24% of global imports. Moreover, fur apparel stands as a durable, eco-friendly material, fully recyclable and biodegradable. In stark contrast, the majority of contemporary clothing is crafted from petroleum-derived synthetics, which resist biodegradation.

I urge you to vote against H 7454 and continue to allow legal fur fashions and products to be sold in the state of Rhode Island.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak against 7454. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

John Mirkopoulos
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