

House Judiciary Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

March 20, 2024

Re: Testimony in **Opposition** to House bill No. 7454 - AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW – GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS - TRADE IN ANIMAL FUR PRODUCTS ACT

Dear Chair Craven and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am Kim Salvo, the manager of Anamoda, Inc. one of the premier wholesale fur companies in New York City's fur district. This is my 32-year career at a profession I love and a job that I never would have imagined having to defend every time fur ban bills like H 7454 come up. I am speaking on behalf of my business, all furriers, and all retail fur stores in America – all operating legally in our communities by selling legal fur products.

Just as your Senate's proposed S2302, I vehemently oppose H 7454 – An Act aiming to make selective legal fur products illegal to sell. Every time this bill hits your RI legislation, professionals like myself debunk the very premise of taking a natural, legally harvested, and manufactured product and criminalizing it apart from the carve outs that certain products made from certain animals have over others when all furs come from animals. If the very exemptions listed in 6-60-4 are all fur products, why is this bill even a consideration?

As members of the Judiciary Committee you must understand the difference between animal cruelty and animal abuse which no one ever wants to see and animal husbandry which all animal usage industries are responsible for.

You must also understand how the retail department stores and fashion designers who have gone selectively "fur-free" did not do so because of their ethical concern over these false depictions of the fur industry, but did so because it is simply impossible to run a business while being harassed, bullied and threatened by radical animal rights terrorists who violently protest and put employees and customers in harms way of their fake cause. No one can run a business under these horrific conditions of store entrances being blocked, stores being invaded and fashion shows disrupted. Those businesses simply caved in over the bullying, just as we find our legislatures doing time and time again.

You must also understand that the synthetic imposter fabrications the anti-fur activists speak of as substitutes to natural fur fashions are nothing more than plastic, fast fashion pollutants that harm the environment and do not even keep you warm. You should keep in mind that all fur is real and a fur coat basically lasts forever. This is why we have labeling acts so that consumers are not duped into believing that microplastic is natural fur and must be labeled "faux fur" when in essence should really be labeled "micro-plastic". But then that would send environmentalists into a tizzy once they realize the harm these materials pose on the environment. Keep in mind there is no substitute for fur.

The last point I will leave you with is that if you are looking to kill animals, then you should pass this bill. If fur bans are intended to stop fur production by then stopping ranching and trapping of fur bearing animals, then the only thing fur ban bills will do is kill those very animals. To clarify

my statement, I refer you to the outcomes of other animal usage bans that have gone into effect. Do you know what happened to the circus animals that were banned from circuses? They all died. Do you know what happened to the dogs who were banned from dog racing? They all died. And do you know what happened to the geese on the goose farms when foie gras is banned? Yep – you guessed it: they all died. And so if you are looking to kill the animals used in the fur industry and make them all die, then you should pass this fur ban bill. Let me explain.

Mink ranches and fur farms operate under regulated third-party control, breeding animals in accordance to the harvest for that season. Fur Commission USA oversees fur farms across the country where I am sure the animal rights groups who rallied for this bill never explained how the animals are cared for, fed, vaccinated, and supervised 365 days a year. Then we have natural wild fur which is regulated by state trapping laws with regulated seasons, trapping licenses and trapper education. Please keep in mind that fur trappers do not trap for fun. They will not harvest fur bearing animals without a market to put them to use and if trappers cannot participate in their heritage, then the government must come in at the expense of the tax payers only to harvest these populations and put the harvest to complete waste. The exact opposite of conservation: making the best use practices of the natural resources available to you. And thus, fur ban bills will only kill animals.

In Rhode Island, Northeast Furs of Warwick is my longtime client and its owner, Dino Quaglietta, our longtime friend. This bill is a direct obliteration of his business, his clientele, which spans generations and his livelihood. How can government condemn the very businesses that support it?

As members of the Judiciary Committee, 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 H 7454. Whereby I would have loved to have appeared in person to your committee, I am happy to have this opportunity to share my expertise in presenting my arguments. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

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