

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 Lazaros Kapetanou of Elan Furs speaking on behalf of my employer's 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 trade supports livelihoods and cultures, especially in rural and remote regions where alternate employment may be hard to find. Fur farms provide employment in regions where the soil is too poor for other agriculture, helping to support rural communities. The fur trade maintains a range of knowledge and skills passed down from generation to generation, a part of our human heritage that should be respected and encouraged, not persecuted with bans based on hateful and misleading propaganda. All of us care about nature, but most of us now live in cities but the indigenous and other trappers are our eyes and ears on the land, the people who monitor wildlife on a daily basis.

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,

Lazaros Kapetanou
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