



Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.

March 3, 2025

Testimony in support of House Bill 5447, to End Fur Cruelty in Rhode Island

Dear Chair Craven and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

FOUR PAWS USA strongly supports bill H.5447, which will end the sale of new fur-farmed products in Rhode Island.

Consumers today have become more aware of how animals are inhumane treated and cruelly killed for their fur on fur farms, along with the environmental degradation caused by the fur industry, and they are seeking to buy clothing, shoes, and accessories that are as ethically produced as they are functional and stylish. This momentum is prompting cities, states, and countries around the world to ban the sale and production of fur, and is leading fashion brands, retailers, and designers to end the use of fur in fashion once and for all.

It is well established that animal cruelty is inherent in the fur industry and over 20 million animals are killed annually for their fur. On fur factory farms, wild animals spend their entire lives in cramped cages, deprived of the ability to engage in natural behaviors. These animals are then killed in inhumane ways - such as crude gassing, anal/genital electrocution and neck breaking - to preserve the quality of their pelts.

The fur industry poses serious environmental threats and risks to public safety as well. 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. Furthermore, it is vitally important to consider the zoonotic risk factors and public health concerns posed by fur farms. Fur farms have proved to be a perfect breeding ground for the spread of COVID-19, and more recently, avian influenza has been reported on fur farms as well.

For these reasons and more, FOUR PAWS kindly urges all Committee members to support H.5447, which would demonstrate Rhode Island's commitment to animal welfare, public health, and environmental stewardship.

Sincerely,

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