
SENATE BILL 5973

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Senator Stanford

1 AN ACT Relating to the unlawful trade of fur products; adding a
2 new chapter to Title 16 RCW; prescribing penalties; and providing an
3 effective date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that animals
6 slaughtered for their fur endure tremendous suffering. Animals raised
7 on fur farms typically spend their entire lives in cramped, filthy
8 cages. Fur farmers typically use the cheapest killing methods
9 available, including suffocation, electrocution, gas, and poison.

10 (2) Fur farms are reservoirs and transmission vectors for
11 dangerous zoonotic diseases, including SARS coronaviruses, that
12 threaten public health, including in Washington. COVID-19 infections
13 have been confirmed at fur farms in Europe and the United States, and
14 scientific studies have linked animals most commonly farmed for their
15 fur, including mink, raccoon, dogs, and foxes, to a variety of
16 coronaviruses.

17 (3) Considering the wide array of alternatives for fashion and
18 apparel, the legislature finds that the demand for fur products does
19 not justify the unnecessary killing and cruel treatment of animals.

1 (4) Eliminating the sale of fur products in Washington will
2 promote community awareness of animal welfare and, in turn, will
3 foster a more humane environment in Washington.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
5 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
6 otherwise.

7 (1) "Fur" means any animal skin or part thereof with hair,
8 fleece, or fur fibers attached, either in its raw or processed state.

9 (2)(a) "Fur product" means any article of clothing or covering
10 for any part of the body, or any fashion accessory including, but not
11 limited to, handbags, shoes, slippers, hats, earmuffs, scarves,
12 shawls, gloves, jewelry, keychains, toys or trinkets, and home
13 accessories and decor, that is made in whole or in part of fur.

14 (b) "Fur product" does not include any of the following:

15 (i) An animal skin or part thereof that is to be converted into
16 leather, which in processing will have the hair, fleece, or fur fiber
17 completely removed;

18 (ii) Cowhide with hair attached;

19 (iii) Deerskin, sheepskin, lambskin, or goatskin with hair
20 attached; or

21 (iv) The pelt or skin of an animal that is preserved through
22 taxidermy or for the purpose of taxidermy.

23 (3) "Nonprofit organization" means any corporation that is
24 organized under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) that is created for
25 charitable, religious, philanthropic, educational, or similar
26 purposes.

27 (4) "Taxidermy" means the practice of preparing, stuffing, and
28 mounting the skin, in lifelike form, of any deceased fish, reptile,
29 amphibian, bird, or mammal.

30 (5) "Ultimate consumer" means an individual who buys a fur
31 product for their own use or for the use of another, but not for
32 resale or trade.

33 (6) "Used fur product" means a fur product that has been worn or
34 used by an ultimate consumer.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) It is unlawful to sell, offer for
36 sale, display for sale, trade, or otherwise distribute for monetary
37 or nonmonetary consideration a fur product in the state. For the

1 purposes of this section, the sale of a fur product is deemed to
2 occur in Washington if the:

3 (a) Buyer takes physical possession of the fur product in
4 Washington; or

5 (b) Seller is located in Washington.

6 (2) The prohibition set forth in subsection (1) of this section
7 does not apply to the following:

8 (a) A used fur product offered for sale by an individual but
9 excluding a retail transaction; a nonprofit organization; or a second
10 hand store, including a pawn shop;

11 (b) A fur product intended for religious or spiritual purposes;
12 or

13 (c) Any activity expressly authorized by federal law.

14 (3) A violation of this section is subject to a penalty of up to
15 \$200.

16 (4) Each fur product that constitutes a violation of this section
17 must be treated as a separate violation.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act takes effect January 1, 2023.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act
20 constitute a new chapter in Title 16 RCW.

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