

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6294

As of January 24, 2024

Title: An act relating to the unlawful trade of fur products.

Brief Description: Prohibiting the unlawful trade of fur products.

Sponsors: Senators Stanford, Kuderer, Lias and Valdez.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Business, Financial Services, Gaming & Trade: 1/25/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes it unlawful to sell fur products in Washington State, subject to certain limitations.
- Creates a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, FINANCIAL SERVICES, GAMING & TRADE

Staff: Clint McCarthy (786-7319)

Background: Fur in Washington State Statute. Fur farming, defined in statute as: the breeding; raising; and rearing of mink, marten, fox, and chinchilla in captivity or enclosures; is authorized by statute as an agricultural pursuit in Washington. The Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (Director) has general authority to adopt rules that prevent the introduction or spreading of infectious diseases into the state, including rules regarding the inspection and testing of all animals in the state or being imported into the state. The Director also has specific authority to exercise quarantine controls over fur farms.

Trapping is unlawful if the person does not possess the appropriate licenses, tags, or permits. Trapping is allowed only between November 1st and March 31st. People who buy

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a Washington State Trapping License for the first time must pass an exam in safe, humane, and proper trapping techniques. Annual licenses for range from \$41.60 for a resident trapping license to \$200.00 for a fur dealer's license. A fur dealer's license allows the holder to purchase, receive, or resell raw furs for commercial purposes. The fee for this license is \$180 and the application fee is \$70.

Banning the Sale of Fur Products. Since 2011, a number of cities in California have banned the sale of various fur products. In 2019, California became the first state to ban the sale of luxury furs such as mink, sable, chinchilla, lynx, fox, rabbit and beaver. This ban has been effective since January 1, 2023.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): The sale of a fur products, with certain limitations, is banned in the state of Washington. Fur is defined as any animal skin or part thereof with hair, fleece, or fur fibers attached either in its raw or processed state. Fur products are defined as any article of clothing or for fashion. Exclusions from the definition of fur product include:

- an animal skin that is converted into leather;
- cowhide, deerskin, goatskin, or sheepskin; the pelt or skin preserved through taxidermy; and
- products containing animal hair, fleece, or fur fibers that are not attached to skin including makeup brushes, paint brushes, and fly-fishing lures.

The sale of fur products as defined in the bill is lawful under limited circumstances. Those circumstances include:

- used fur products offered for sale by an individual is excluded from the ban;
- fur obtained from lawful trapping or hunting;
- items sold in a face-to-face transaction at a residence, craft fair or other temporary location by the person who trapped or hunted the animal. Cannot be the primary source of income for this person; and
- any activity expressly authorized under federal law.

Violations of the provisions banning the sale of fur is subject to a civil penalty of no more than \$1,000. Each fur product that constitutes a violation of this act must be treated like a separate violation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on January 1, 2025.