

STELLA McCARTNEY

Dear Assembly Member,

I am writing to you to voice my resolute support for AB-44, a bill that would prohibit the sale and manufacture of fur products in California.

At Stella McCartney, we have never used fur or leather in our collections and we do not believe that animals should die for the sake of fashion. We are no longer the only company that feels this way. Over the past few years countless brands and designers have woken up to the unequivocal cruelty of the fur industry and have subsequently stopped using fur in their collections. More and more consumers believe it is unacceptable to buy or sell any animal fur. The world is moving in a more positive direction and it is time for California to take the vital next step.

California has shown itself to be a world-leader regarding progressive animal welfare measures by already banning fur sales in Los Angeles, San Francisco, West Hollywood and Berkeley. The current state of fur products is inconsistent with California's role as a leader in animal welfare measures and its reputation as the most humane state in the country. AB-44 is a response to these public values and will foster a more humane environment in California.

Fur has no place in any compassionate society and today its use is unnecessary and inexcusable. Plainly, fur is immoral, cruel and barbaric. Whether the animal lived on a fur farm or was trapped in the wild, each fur coat, trinket, and trim is the result of tremendous animal suffering and a life cruelly taken away.

Fur is not a by-product; it is an industry that capitalises on death, slaughtering more than 100 million animals per year. The majority of these animals live out their lives in battery-cage farm systems filled with barren, filthy, wire-floored cages that are too small. Such conditions cause psychological stress to the animals and lead to cannibalism, illness and deformities.

The caged raccoon dogs, rabbits, foxes, mink, chinchillas, and other animals are killed by anal electrocution, neck breaking or gassing. The excruciating live skinning of raccoon dogs has been documented, whose fur is widely sold, commonly advertised and falsely labelled – or not labelled at all. These are the fur farms we know about; the ones visited and audited. We can safely assume far crueler mistreatment of animals in the farms that go unchecked and unseen. These processes refer solely to fur farming: wild animal trapping, however, is equally brutal. Steel leg clamps, neck snares, head-crushing and body-gripping traps that come certified under international treaties cause unthinkable suffering and a slow, lingering death. If there are those who claim this is a compassionate and legitimate industry, we are calling on you to open your doors and grant us complete transparency into your methods and conditions so we can openly see what takes place.

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In addition to the overwhelming ethical reasons for banning the sale of fur, evidence and research proves that fur is completely unsustainable. A common defense deployed by the fur industry is that fur is natural and therefore inextricable with sustainability. This claim is false and misleading. First, fur is natural only in the sense that it comes from an animal; however, in order to be sellable fur has to be tanned in a process contaminated by toxic chemicals and heavy metals. This stops the natural decomposition process. It is important to highlight that something from natural origins does not inherently make it sustainable and innocuous.

There are indeed environmental implications where faux fur is concerned, however when compared to real fur, the cruelty-free alternative has a significantly reduced impact to the planet. Taking into account the wide availability of alternative faux fur products on the market with the look and feel of real fur, the need to slaughter animals becomes redundant and archaic. We no longer need to kill in the name of fashion.

We continue to innovate sustainable and biodegradable solutions as part of our modern ethos and are focused on creating the next generation of faux furs that match this ethos to further demonstrate the redundancy of the fur trade. Our ethical stance continues to resonate with the growing number of young people who we employ across the world. These ethics feel particularly potent in California, a state recognised for an enduring kindness and affection.

We hope that a more progressive attitude will galvanise the fashion industry into supporting creative, new and alternative ideas, leading to prosperous business opportunities in California. We promise to lead the way in finding new and environmentally friendly ways of creating animal free and cruelty free fashion.

I urge you support AB-44, which will ban the sale and manufacture of fur in California.

Let's create a fur free world today!

Yours faithfully,

Stella McCartney

Creative Director

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