

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6192

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions, January 25, 2000

Title: An act relating to the unlawful conveyance of domesticated dog or cat fur.

Brief Description: Prohibiting sale of domesticated dog or cat fur without accurate labeling.

Sponsors: Senators Fairley, Prentice, Heavey, Thibaudeau, Loveland, Kohl-Welles, Gardner, Kline, Shin, Franklin, B. Sheldon, Spanel, Rasmussen, Hargrove, Costa, Eide, Fraser, Wojahn, McAuliffe and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions: 1/20/2000, 1/25/2000 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, HOUSING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Benton, Gardner, Hale, Heavey, Rasmussen, T. Sheldon and Winsley.

Staff: Dave Cheal (786-7576)

Background: Fur apparel made in part or entirely from domestic dog or cat fur is reportedly being marketed in the United States without any labeling of the origin or species of the pelt, or with false or misleading labeling. It is believed that if buyers knew that domestic dog and cat fur was used to make a coat being offered for sale, many would not buy the product.

Summary of Bill: It is unlawful to place into the stream of commerce the fur of a domestic dog or cat, or any product containing the fur of a domestic dog or cat, unless it is accurately labeled as such.

The first conviction is punishable as a misdemeanor, with a mandatory minimum fine of \$250. A second conviction is punishable as a gross misdemeanor, with a mandatory minimum fine of \$500. Third and subsequent convictions are punishable as a class C felony with a mandatory minimum fine of \$1000. Confinement for a misdemeanor is up to 90 days, for a gross misdemeanor, up to one year, and for a class C felony, five years.

Violation of the labeling requirements is also a violation of the Consumer Protection Act.

Domestic dog and cat fur or fur products marketed in violation of the act are subject to seizure and forfeiture by law enforcement. Seizure may occur upon process issued by the

appropriate superior court or without process if done incident to arrest or a search pursuant to a warrant.

Procedures are provided for certain innocent owners or partial owners to recover possession of the property.

The sentencing guidelines statute is amended to include this new crime.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2000.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Domestic dog and cat fur products are being imported into the United States without labeling as to the species of the fur, or with false and misleading labels. This industry engages in extremely brutal practices. Many buyers would not purchase these products if they knew they were made from domestic dog and cat fur.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Lisa Wathne, Humane Society of the U.S.; Jasmin Baker-Kinney; Kay Joubert, PAWS; Kay Farrell.