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Ann Arbor City Council

21-1404 An Ordinance to Amend Sections 7:360, 7:361 and 7:362 and to Amend by Adding New Sections Which Sections Shall Be Designated as 7:363, 7:364 and 7:365 of Chapter 91 (Endangered Species) of Title VII (Businesses and Trades) of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor (ORD-21-26)

Testimony

Good evening, Council Members and Mayor. My name is Beatrice M. Friedlander and I'm the president of the board of Attorneys for Animals, Inc., (AFA) a Michigan-based nonprofit with attorney, law student and advocate members and supporters from around the SOM, including Washtenaw County and Ann Arbor.

I've had the opportunity to speak to several of our members who are Ann Arbor residents, and who support this proposed ordinance. AFA's board of directors also has voted to support the Fur Ban Ordinance.

The proposal before you this evening has been revised from the original draft, and we believe the revisions make it stronger. We appreciate the effort to work with various stakeholders to improve this bill.

It is appropriate to expand Chapter 91, which currently regulates use of Endangered Species in businesses and trades, to all animals raised and slaughtered for their fur. This ordinance would continue to protect Endangered Species, while recognizing that *any* animal who is raised for their fur suffer, and the other negative consequences of this industry are present, regardless of the animal being used.

This ordinance is a proper exercise of the City's authority to promote awareness of animal welfare and foster a more humane environment in the city. The 3 prongs upon which the proposed ban is based are:

1. Animal suffering
2. Environmental concerns
3. Public health—particularly salient now with scientific evidence of the links between the fur industry and the spread of viruses such as COVID 19, from mink fur farms to humans.

Similar sales bans have been enacted in cities around the country, from San Francisco to Wellesley, MA and others. Ann Arbor would join this group as the 1st midwestern city. In

March 2021, a federal judge rejected a challenge to the SF ban by a Fur Trade group that claim it violated the United States Constitution's commerce clause. Note that the San Francisco ban was passed in 2019 before COVID.

It is not just local governments that have recognized the need for fur sales bans. California was the first state to ban fur sales (in 2019, effective from 2023); and similar bills have been introduced this year in RI, OR, CT, HI, NY. Israel became the first country to ban fur sales, just this June.

There are many good reasons to pass this ban. Now is a particularly good time.

Thank you.