

LEGAL AND PRIVACY

Lawsuit filed to overturn San Francisco's ban on fur

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**THE SIMPLE FACT IS:
THE GLOBAL FUR TRADE IS
VALUED AT MORE THAN \$40BN**

Fur is a big business worldwide, although under tremendous pressure from activists and PETA. Image credit: Fur Information Council of America

By STAFF REPORTS

The International Fur Federation has challenged San Francisco's ban on the sale of new fur and fur-trimmed coats.

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Effective Jan. 1, the city ordinance ban prohibits the sale of all fur apparel, including coats, trims and accessories. The Fur Information Council of America opposes the ban and hailed the lawsuit.

"This ban does nothing to improve animal welfare," said Keith Kaplan, spokesperson for the Fur Information Council, in a statement.

"True progressivism is not the city council dictating to people that they can't buy fur or what they must eat or wear, but in supporting science-based programs such as FurMark that ensure sustainability and animal welfare," he said.

Not wild for ban

The International Fur Federation lawsuit claims that San Francisco's ban driven by the city health department is unconstitutional and does not serve a legitimate local interest, such as health or safety.

The council said the San Francisco ordinance is so far-reaching that it even bans fur products regulated by the fish and wildlife agencies and certified under FurMark, which is a global, science-based program that verifies sustainability and animal welfare in fur production.

Per the Fur Information Council, San Francisco's ban also opens the door to greater infringement on consumer choice.

The organization claimed "[t]he ban was driven by ideological animal liberation radicals who also want to ban wool, leather, cashmere and other animal-based fibers or food products, such as meat, poultry, eggs, seafood and even pet companionship."



No more fur for Chanel. Image credit: Chanel

The lawsuit is one of many against California's laws, including litigation by the U.S. state of Louisiana against a California state law prohibiting sale of alligator byproducts. Louisiana won a temporary stay on this ban.

The outcome of the Louisiana lawsuit could have implications for both Los Angeles and the state of California, both of which passed fur bans in 2019 that go into effect in several years, the Fur Information Council said.

That said, the furor over fur has already taken a toll ([see story](#)).

Bloomingdale's, Prada, Phillip Lim, Farfetch and Macy's last year joined a growing list of brands and retailers such as Burberry, Chanel and Yoox Net-A-Porter Group in removing real animal fur from production and sales floors.

Even before the recent bans, an industry started taking birth, spawning new brands such as [Maison Atia](#) whose products incorporate faux fur and tout them as a key selling point.

For its part, PETA has no intention of letting up the pressure.

"The fur industry is desperate to keep confining animals to filthy cages, breaking their legs in steel-jaw traps, shooting or electrocuting them, or breaking their necks for fur that most designers won't use and kind consumers won't wear," said Tracy Reiman, executive vice president at PETA, Washington.

"Just as the meat industry has begun investing in vegan meats, investing in vegan materials would be a far better use of time and money than battling to block a ban that's simply a symptom of the fur industry's decline," she said.

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