

U.S. Lawmakers Introduce Kangaroo Protection Act to Blunt the World's 'Largest Wildlife Slaughter'

Congressmen Salud Carbajal and Brian Fitzpatrick Say 'No More Killing Kangaroos for Athletic Shoes'

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, February 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- U.S. Representatives Salud Carbajal, D-Calif., and Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Penn., this week introduced the [Kangaroo Protection Act](#) to ban the sale of kangaroo body parts in the United States. The bill aims to curb the massive trade in kangaroo skins used by Nike, adidas, Puma, and other

companies for manufacturing soccer shoes ("cleats"). Though sold throughout the world, the U.S. is the second-largest market, behind only the European Union. Animal Wellness Action, Animal Wellness Foundation, Center for a Humane Economy and SPCA International, the Michelson Center for Public Policy, and others applaud the initiative and call on lawmakers to pass the legislation.

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Wayne Pacelle

“Nike and other major athletic shoe companies are fueling the world's largest commercial slaughter of terrestrial wildlife,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy. “It's time for the company to shed kangaroo skins from its product lines and embrace 21st-century sensibilities about wildlife protection.”



Kangaroo amidst the ongoing Australian wildfires

"Commercial shooters kill roughly two million wild kangaroos a year to profit from the trade in their skins, despite the availability of alternative fabrics that are of similar or better quality. While California has banned the sale of kangaroo products, enforcement of this inhumane practice is lacking," said Rep. Salud Carbajal, D-Calif. "I'm proud to stand against kangaroo trafficking and

have introduced the Kangaroo Protection Act to make it illegal to exploit kangaroos in the United States and impose penalties for violations."

"Kangaroos are victims of the largest commercial slaughter of land-based wildlife in the world. As a member of the bipartisan Congressional Animal Protection Caucus and an outspoken defender of animals, I will continue to be committed to ensuring that our government is doing everything in its power to promote and protect animal welfare," said Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Penn. "Our bipartisan Kangaroo Protection Act of 2021 will make it illegal to exploit kangaroos in the United States and ensure that penalties are imposed for violations. I am proud to join my colleague Rep. Carbajal in this fight."

Last week, Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy, working with two Hollywood filmmakers, released a widely shared, controversial short film on this topic. Using reverse sequencing, the film starts with a soccer player kicking a goal and ends with a kangaroo about to be killed in the Outback, tracing the distinct, connecting steps in between. [View the video here.](#)

Representative Carbajal and two other California lawmakers, inspired by a recent [investigative report](#) from the Center for a Humane Economy, wrote California Attorney General Xavier Becerra (President Biden's nominee for Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services) urging full enforcement of California's first-in-the-nation ban on kangaroo parts and other species. Though the ban has been solidly in place since 2016, Nike and other manufacturers and retailers throughout California openly defied the law with ongoing and brisk sales of kangaroo skin soccer shoes. Working with the Center, law enforcement personnel from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, local police, and prosecutors are beginning to enforce the law, Penal Code 6530. In the last month, the largest chain of soccer stores in California has stopped selling the euphemistically-titled "k-leather" models.

"Major sports brands continue to make soccer shoes from kangaroo skins, a throwback to the 1970s, even though today they offer hundreds of models without kangaroo skin, using high tech synthetics and plant-based fabrics that perform better on the pitch," noted Meredith Ayan, executive director of SPCA International. "These companies have touted their sustainability goals and commitment to the environment yet are still driving this massive commercial kill."

The Center issued a first-of-its-kind list of 72 models of kangaroo skin soccer shoes from adidas, Lotto, Mizuno, New Balance, Nike, Pantofolo d'Oro, Puma, and Umbro. Sportswear manufacturer Diadora stopped using kangaroo skin last year. The Center has a dedicated website on the issue, www.KangaroosAreNotShoes.org.

"It is unconscionable to kill wild animals for their hides when a plethora of high-quality synthetic products are available," said Dr. Gary K. Michelson, founder, and co-chair of the Michelson Center for Public Policy. "California had the foresight to ban trade in kangaroo parts several years ago. Now is the time for the rest of the country to follow suit and end this barbaric activity that is

only in the service of enhanced corporate profits.”.

Former Congressman Robert Mrazek introduced his version of the Kangaroo Protection Act last in 1988, and until now, no similar legislation has been advanced in Congress. The bill has been assigned to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The Center for a Humane Economy (“the Center”) is a non-profit organization that focuses on influencing the conduct of corporations to forge a humane economic order. The Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both.

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We believe helping animals helps us all.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

SPCA International is a global animal welfare organization with a mission that is simple, but vast: to advance the safety and well-being of animals. Through outreach, rescue, and education programs, SPCA International spearheads lifesaving initiatives and assists grassroots animal activists worldwide.

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