

Congressmembers Introduce Kangaroo Protection Act to End Sales of Kangaroo Skins for Athletic Shoes and Products

Nike and Puma Made Public Pronouncements in March That They'd Halt Use of Kangaroo Skins in Their Supply Chains by the End of the Year

WASHINGTON DC, UNITED STATES, July 31, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leading a bipartisan group of three Republicans and three Democrats as sponsors, U.S. Representatives Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Penn., and Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill.,

introduced the Kangaroo Protection Act, [H.R. 4995](#), to ban the sale of kangaroo body parts in the United States. The bill comes just months after Puma and Nike announced they'd halt further sourcing of kangaroo skins for their soccer cleats, and as the Center for a Humane Economy (the "Center") and other animal-welfare groups press Adidas, Mizuno, and New Balance to stop any use of kangaroo skins in their shoe offerings.

“

In America, we don't allow this kind of mass commercial slaughter of our native wildlife, and neither should we import wildlife parts and outsource these killing sprees.”

Wayne Pacelle

The United States, along with the European Union and China, is one of the biggest markets for soccer cleats in the world. In addition to the Center, Animal Wellness Action, Animal Wellness Foundation, SPCA International, the Massachusetts SPCA, the Michelson Center for Public Policy, and others applaud the initiative and call on lawmakers to pass the legislation. Representatives Jeff Van

Drew, R-N.J., Nanette Barragán, D-Calif., Tom Kean, R-N.J., and Troy Carter, D-La. round out the leadership group on the issue. When he served as minority leader in the New Jersey Senate, Kean led a bill to ban the trade in kangaroo parts.

“The Kangaroo Protection Act will cut off the U.S. market for Australian commercial shooters and global major athletic shoe companies whose supply-and-demand relationship has been driving the slaughter more as many as two million kangaroos a year, including hundreds of thousands



KANGAROOS ARE NOT SHOES

of joeys orphaned after their mothers are shot,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy. “In America, we don’t allow this kind of mass commercial slaughter of our native wildlife, and neither should we import wildlife parts and outsource these killing sprees. We are so grateful to Reps. Fitzpatrick and Schakowsky and other lawmakers from both parties for leading the fight.”



Kangaroos are the most commercially slaughtered animal in the world. Puma's announcement portends relief for Australia's iconic marsupial.

Few, if any, players in the Women's World Cup are wearing shoes made from the skins of kangaroos in the competition that started earlier this month in Australia—a trend we've seen with elite men's soccer play at the World Cup and the European Championships.

Just days ago, Australian animal advocates, led by the Animal Justice Party, [staged a protest](#) at the flagship adidas store in Sydney. Their Turn, a New York-based animal rights organization led by Donny Moss, has [conducted a series of protests](#) at flagship Adidas stores in New York City. Both groups vowed to step up direct action against the company until it stops sourcing kangaroos for shoes. All major animal welfare groups in Australia, including Animals Australia and the RSPCA, oppose the commercial slaughter of kangaroos for their parts.

“As a co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I am proud to lead the charge on policies that promote animal welfare and conserve our wildlife,” said Congressman Fitzpatrick. “Our bipartisan Kangaroo Protection Act will prohibit the commercial sale of kangaroos, ensuring that those who exploit these animals in the United States are held accountable.”

“Over two million kangaroos are killed for commercial purposes each year. As a staunch animal rights advocate, I believe we owe it to these majestic creatures to protect their welfare,” said Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky. “I am proud to lead the bipartisan Kangaroo Protection Act, which will make it illegal to exploit kangaroos in the United States and impose penalties for violations.”

The Center for a Humane Economy has conducted a series of investigative actions highlighting that Adidas is violating California's state law banning the trade in kangaroo parts. That law has been revived since 2016, and the Center and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife have notified companies about their obligations under Penal Code 653o. The Center and its allies

have filed unfair competition actions against retailers in California continuing to sell kangaroo-based shoes and is systematically shutting down this contraband. These investigations show that Adidas is unable to control the illegal sale of its products in California made from kangaroos.

“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 Michelson Center for Public Policy, based in Los Angeles. “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.” In just 20 years, from 2001 to 2021 the population of Australia’s kangaroos has dropped by around 50 percent, according to Australian Commonwealth officials.

“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,” said Lori Kalef with SPCA International. “These companies have touted their sustainability goals and commitment to the environment yet are still driving this massive commercial kill.”

Just three years ago, there were approximately 1.7 million kangaroos killed in the commercial slaughter for their parts, and that does not include up to 500,000 joeys orphaned in the process. That commercial kill number has dropped to one million, according to government counts. In 2019, 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 in 2020, preceding the declarations from Nike and Puma. The number of shoe models with kangaroo skin has dropped dramatically since the Center’s launch of its “Kangaroos Are Not Shoes” campaign, along with the commercial kill. The Center’s campaign has demanded that all other athletic wear companies pledge to end their sales of these shoes in short order and has worked to initiate bills in more than a half dozen states to end any trade in kangaroo parts. The Center has a dedicated website on the issue, www.KangaroosAreNotShoes.org.

Recently, the Center and the MSPCA have engaged in encouraging discussions with New Balance, the last major U.S. manufacturer relying on kangaroo skins, to end shoe offerings of that type.

In 2021, Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy, working with two Hollywood filmmakers, released a vivid, widely shared 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: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aM1HXFmLPhU>.

A companion bill in the U.S. Senate is expected to be introduced soon. Former Congressman Robert Mrazek, D-N.Y., introduced his version of the Kangaroo Protection Act in 1988, and until

now, no similar legislation has been advanced in Congress. The U.S. House bill has been assigned to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. Twitter: @AWAction_News

Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, 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. The Center believes helping animals helps us all. Twitter: @TheHumaneCenter

Animal Wellness Foundation is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization whose mission is to help animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. The Foundation advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. The Animal Wellness Foundation believes helping animals helps us all.

The Michelson Center for Public Policy is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization that propels legislative change through meaningful collaboration with elected officials, government agencies, and civic leaders to achieve positive outcomes in education, equity, medical research, and animal welfare. The Michelson Center for Public Policy is an affiliated but separate organization from the Michelson Philanthropies network of foundations (Michelson 20MM Foundation, Michelson Found Animals Foundation, and Michelson Medical Research Foundation) and complements the Michelson Philanthropies' thought leadership and expertise with bold and effective advocacy.

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.

Wayne Pacelle Pacelle
ANIMAL WELLNESS ACTION
+ 12024200446
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/647376572>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.