

Honorable council members,

My name is Dan Mathews. I'm a Senior Vice President at PETA, where I have worked since 1985.

PETA was involved in the fur bans that passed overwhelmingly in L.A. and San Francisco, and we are heartened that New York is poised to be next. Lawmakers are voting to ban fur sales because fur producers operate outside of the law. Unlike other industries that use animals, fur producers do not receive government oversight or inspection to ensure that the animals live or die with even minimal standards.

PETA filmed a mink farmer in Maryland who killed the animals by injecting them with weed killer, which caused a slow and painful death, but which the owner found cheap and easy. He had no experience and no interest in veterinary medicine. We filmed a chinchilla farmer in Indiana who electrocuted the animals by clamping their genitals with a cord leading to a car battery. He sometimes used too weak a voltage and some animals hobbled off the skinning board, which he found funny. He had no experience and no interest in veterinary medicine.

In Korea, we filmed a fur farmer who swung foxes by the tail between two wooden boards, and then crushed them to death before exporting their pelts to New York. In China, we filmed fur farmers who slammed raccoon dogs' heads into the ground, which dazed them but didn't kill them. They were skinned alive. Dog fur from China has ended up on racks here in New York City where it was mislabeled as fake. The Federal Trade Commission cited many retailers for false labeling, but there were no penalties whatsoever. That's why we need a law banning fur that comes with a penalty.

Nowadays in the States, with little interest in fur coats, animals are often killed for less conspicuous fur trim or collars—mostly coyotes, killed in traps like this.

It looks like a medieval torture device that should have been banned long ago. In fact, over 100 countries have banned these traps. But only seven states in the U.S. have banned them, meaning traps are used coast to coast, including just outside the city in upstate NY and Connecticut.

Why have 100 countries banned these traps? Let's take a look at how they operate.

[Demonstrate trap]

This trap is available for \$10 on Amazon. It's meant for coyotes, who trappers then bludgeon to death, but they routinely ensnare family dogs, cats, owls, and the occasional human hiker. Like fur farms, trapping is a sadistic, self-regulated hobby. Trappers claim they check their traps daily, but if the weather's bad, a game's on TV, or they just don't feel like it, animals can languish for days. They die of exhaustion, infection, shock, or by being eaten by a predator from whom they can't escape. Some animals, especially mothers desperate to return to their young, even attempt to chew off their limbs to escape.

Trapping cannot be regulated because only the trappers know where the traps are set.

Like fur farmers, trappers operate outside the view of the law. That's why lawmakers are banning fur.

Thank you.