



August 24, 2015

The Honorable Kevin DeLeon
President pro Tempore
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins
Speaker
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Requesting reinstatement of California's kangaroo trade ban

Dear President pro Tempore De Leon and Speaker Atkins,

We are writing to urge you to let the exemption on California's kangaroo trade ban expire. If the legislature does nothing, California's long-standing prohibition on trade in kangaroo parts will be reinstated. This would allow California to stop its contribution to the world's largest land-based commercial slaughter of wildlife. Three million adult kangaroos and hundreds of thousands of joys are ruthlessly killed every year, threatening the species' long-term viability.

California has prohibited the trade of kangaroo parts since 1971. However, intense lobbying from the Australian government and kangaroo industry over the last decade has led to a temporary exemption of this longstanding law. As a slow-growing and slow breeding animal, kangaroos are at significant risk of local and regional extinction if commercial hunting continues. Four species of wild kangaroos (Eastern Grey, Western Grey, Red and Wallaroo) are killed annually at unsustainable rates.

Survival rates of young kangaroo joeys are low, with up to 73 percent of juvenile Western Grey kangaroos dying in their first year out of their mothers' pouch. With annual cull quotas varying between 10 and 20 percent of government estimated populations, kangaroo populations cannot sustain commercial hunting without experiencing a decline. In just the last decade the Australian government has estimated a significant decline in kangaroo populations, dropping from 57 million in 2001 to 34 million by 2010.

Due to the remote nature of kangaroo hunting, and because it takes place at night, there is virtually no monitoring in place. The Australian National Code of Practice advises that hunters shoot kangaroos through the brain to ensure immediate death, but because heads are removed before reaching the processor, there is no accurate confirmation. Low visibility at night often results in kangaroos being shot in their body or neck and left to die slowly and painfully or destroyed, since their pelt has been blemished by the body shot.

Further, because it is legal to shoot pregnant and nursing kangaroos, non-targeted joeys fall victim to inhumane hunting practices at astonishing rates. When any female kangaroo with a joey in her pouch or nearby is killed, the hunter is advised to bludgeon the joey to death or decapitate it. More than 850,000 joeys are ruthlessly killed every year. And young kangaroos who escape the hunt are at risk of dying from starvation, exposure and predation.

Kangaroo skins are most commonly used for high-end soccer cleats; however, technological advancements in high-tech synthetic materials have shown that kangaroo leather is not necessary for enhanced performance. Given this, and greater awareness surrounding the cruelty of the kangaroo industry, professional soccer players like David Beckham and Cristiano Ronaldo stopped wearing cleats made from kangaroo skin.

The California Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of the prohibition. Given the uncertainty of the populations' sustainability and the inherent cruelty, it is imperative that California allows the exemption on the prohibition of trade in kangaroo parts to expire.

Sincerely,

Nicole Paquette

The Humane Society of the United States

Steve Wells

Jena Price
California League of Conservation Voters

Julia DiSieno
Animal Rescue Team

Andrew Orahoske

lauren Ornelas
Food Empowerment Project

Rosemary Alles
Global March for Elephants and Rhinos
March for Elephants

Alison Stanley
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Camila Fox
Project Coyote

Pam Runquist

Animal Legal Defense Fund

Kathryn Phillips
Sierra Club California

Environmental Protection Information
Center

Ali Crumpacker
Fund for Animals Wildlife Center

Kimberly Baker
Klamath Forest Alliance

Brandy Kuentzel
San Francisco SCPA

Jim Jensvold
The Paw Project

Madeline Bernstein
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Humane Society Veterinary Medical
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Kelle Kacmarcik

WildCare

Monte Merrick
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Rick Johnson
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