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Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business
RE: Support for *LD 1551 - An Act To Ban The Sale of Cosmetics That Have Been Tested on Animals*

Dear Senator Curry, Rep. Roberts, & Members of the Committee:

My colleagues, friends, and family were shocked when I announced I was taking a "career break" at almost-50-years-old to volunteer with an extreme animal rescue team in Southeast Asia. In 2018, I joined a ragtag band of animal welfare advocates to alleviate suffering, combat cruelty, and rescue dogs, cats, and critters exposed to dog fighting and cock fighting, natural disasters, dog-meat festivals, or other abandonment, neglect, trauma, and abuses. Because of the intense nature of the work, we took time between ventures to explore nearby villages and cities, jungles, and islands. We cleared our exhausted brains and bodies by exposing ourselves to the beautiful native people, food, and cultures before immersing ourselves back into the brutal realities of the work we were doing.

I'm now back in my own country and my home State of Maine and returned to the energy and environmental profession that I love. Unfortunately, I also returned to a country that engages in its own sanctioned cruel and unnecessary practices, such as animal testing for cosmetics. For example, so that people can supposedly look better or feel younger, animals have substances forced down their throats, dripped into their eyes, or applied to their skin, often for weeks or months, before they are killed. These practices are legal and allowed even though those same companies can produce effective products using existing ingredients that are not elements of torture of living, vulnerable, and yes, pain-feeling, animals.

During my volunteer work, I watched dogs starved and brutalized before throwing them into a dirt pit to tear each other apart while people cheered, drank, and gambled. The still-alive dogs were thrown out into piles with the dead ones. I saw live cats, dogs, rabbits, and other defenseless animals crammed into cages and left out in 100-degree humidity at markets to sell for food, fighting, or other excruciating lives and deaths. Cosmetics testing is also abuse, but the difference is that it's done in hidden corporate labs away from the eyes of the public. Money is still being exchanged, but instead of poor farmers drinking rice wine and wagering their hard-earned money on whether their chicken or dog lives or dies, wealthy executives are making their millions on the anguish and pain of animals.

This is the United States of America and cruel and inhumane animal abuse and cruelty should not be happening here.

Please support *LD 1551 – An Act To Ban The Sale of Cosmetics That Have Been Tested on Animals*.

Sincerely,



Jeff Marks